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Winter • 1953-54

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 23 *Winter, 1953-54* NUMBER 1

Some Observations on Intellectual Freedom

DAVID RIESMAN

At the Spring meeting of the Editorial Board of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, in April, 1953, there was an extended discussion of an article entitled "Loyalty and Freedom," by Archibald MacLeish. A majority of the Board members voted for the publication of this article, and it was, consequently, published in the Autumn, 1953, number.

At the same time, several of the members of the Board were opposed to its publication, despite their very high regard for its author, Mr. MacLeish. One member of the Board, David Riesman, presented effectively his argument for this position, and, accordingly, was invited by the other members of the Board to set forth his point of view in the Winter number.

Despite Mr. Riesman's reluctance, largely, as he later put it, from a disinclination "to attack so brilliant and courageous and useful a citizen as Archibald MacLeish," he consented to write the following article. In accordance with THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR's practice, we present a brief reply to this by Mr. MacLeish.

THE EDITOR

And if the ice was really to be broken, laughter and jest must be introduced into the consideration of the matter. In politics or business it would be obvious enough that one could not achieve a realistic view of what was happening if one was debarred from discussing principles or acts save in terms of respectful solemnity. Fun and ridicule must be allowed to play their part in the analysis of the motives or characters or doings of the principal actors; otherwise political discussion would remain at an unrealistic level, and those who discussed them would have a sense of servitude.

R. F. Harrod, *The Life of John Maynard Keynes*

VAGUE AND HORTATORY ARTICLES and speeches about the crisis of our age are a sign of the "respectful solemnity" we ethno-

✪ DAVID RIESMAN is professor of the social sciences and a member of the Committee on Human Development at the University of Chicago. Author of *The Lonely Crowd*, a study of the American character, and *Faces in the Crowd*, he has just published *Thorstein Veblen: A Critical Interpretation*. This article formed the basis of an address presented at Mills College in October of this year.

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centrically reserve for *our* problems. I myself have sinned by entitling a monograph *Civil Liberties in a Period of Transition,* falling too uncritically in with the comfortably disquieting supposition that the time in which I happen to be alive is by definition such a period! Such rhetorical grandiosity may illustrate Tocqueville's observation that as a result of living in a democracy, the American's "ideas are all either extremely minute and clear, or extremely general and vague; what lies between is an open void."

This article is an effort to enter, in a somewhat dialectical fashion, into the open void, and to do so without the sense of servitude that characterizes much contemporary talk and writing about the fate of the intellectuals. I shall discuss some new-found conformities that seem to be emerging among many people who claim, often with good right, the mantle of liberalism; I am also curious about general tendencies influencing the position and self-confidence of intellectuals. Archibald MacLeish's article on "Loyalty and Freedom" is therefore (in the circumstances detailed in Mr. Haydn's editorial note) only the occasion compelling me to set down observations long accumulating. If, in what follows, I sometimes refer to his piece, I do so because it provides a ready illustration; many others could be found. I want to make it clear that I respect Mr. MacLeish's integrity and generosity; his motives recall Yeats's lines: "All things can tempt me from this craft of verse. . . . The seeming needs of my fool-driven land. . . ." If, to a person of my trade and training, certain poets and other artists appear at times politically naive when they make proclamations (while I must appear naive in another sense to them), this naïveté doesn't bother me and doesn't require an "answer"; I will fight with any censor for the right of such people to go on being naive and "irresponsible." At best, my article is intended not to engender a debate, but to qualify a tone and thereby the better to represent the pluralism which is one of the glories of liberalism.

I

Intellectuals try to cope with anxiety by telling each other atrocity stories about America. When this is done in science fiction, as in the *Galaxy* serial "Gravy Planet" (recently republished in a pocket book as *The Space Merchants*), it can be witty and even revealing.

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But when it is done with seriousness and portentousness, the consequences are quite frequently anti-intellectual, stultifying thought in the listener, who, bemused at once by guilt and by self-righteousness, murmurs "Amen, how true."

Other than as the expression of a current mood of a priori despair, the tales about America currently in circulation are often not entirely true. When, for instance, America's justly criticizable follies and excesses are compared with the systematic and calculated terror of the Soviet Union and the Nazis, the double standard applied misleads us in our estimation of events on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Totalitarianism, though it draws on attitudes and on techniques of organization available in the Western and perhaps the whole world, becomes in its totality something new as soon as it seizes power; as Hannah Arendt has observed, we quite fail to understand totalitarianism when we simply extrapolate from (or back to) societies where the party system and its ideological competition still function, however badly. In my opinion, totalitarian societies, once in power, dispense to a large extent with group or national loyalty (which involves danger of overadherence to principle), much as they dispense with ideological propaganda for internal consumption (replacing it with instructions in what the "line" now is, and who has hold of it). If many writers appear to overestimate the loyalty engendered under totalitarianism, they also fail to count their blessings when they attack the apathy—that is, the lack of loyalty to ideals—of many Americans. For this very apathy has its positive side as a safeguard against the overpoliticization of the country: the apathetic ones, often not so much fearful or faithless as bored, may be as immunized against political appeals, good or bad, as against much commercial advertising. Although, of course, there is much pressure for an undiscriminating chauvinistic loyalty and belongingness to a wide variety of groups, including the nation, I am impressed by the fact that among GI's there is far less nationalism than in the first World War—indeed, the pressure for loyalty may be, among many other things, one form, often unconscious, of the battle between older and younger generations.

Moreover, the conflict between loyalty and freedom may be quite absent from the minds of many politically apathetic people

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who appear to be "followers" of Senator McCarthy. They see him in terms of the drama of his career: has he found a gimmick that will get him ahead? The meaning they see in him resembles what they find in figures of the entertainment world or the underworld who have risen to the top without gentility, without connections, and apparently without education. Some of those who have this dramatic view of what on the surface operates as an "anti-Communist crusade" are quite prepared to continue to befriend neighbors who, as ex-Communists, have been called before Congressional committees, because for them the salient issue is not one of loyalty, or of politics at all. They may even be a bit proud to know somebody who got into the papers. I don't know how widespread this apolitical reaction is, but I do know that it is terribly difficult to interpret what Mr. MacLeish refers to as "our silence as a people." European intellectuals can make very little of it either, perhaps because American cynicism and European cynicism exist in very different contexts. When we try to deal with so big and stratified a country as ours—so big that it often cannot hear the talk of the articulate—we ought not to begin by reading into others our own fears and idealisms.

Something of a double standard is also employed in many conventional comparisons of the American present with the American past. If, despite the Know-Nothings, a rough toleration has at times been maintained within our country (whose Northerners sometimes forget the Civil War), fears and hatreds have found outlets against Indians, Mexicans, Spaniards, and Japanese (wars often fought or prolonged for social-psychological reasons after the enemy had virtually capitulated). Moreover, to exalt the Founding Fathers as having faith in man, as Mr. MacLeish does, would certainly come as a surprise to crusty John Adams and to Madison; Jefferson might be willing, periodically, to accept the accolade. The Constitution exists, and is the magnificent job it is, in large part because the Fathers had so very limited a faith in man that they sought to protect us from our own and each other's weaknesses wherever possible. The more we know about American eighteenth-century thought, the more complex it appears: strands of religious pessimism persisted from the Great Awakening; the Enlightenment itself was no single-voiced adventure in optimism (recall

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Diderot's *Rameau's Nephew*); much talk of Reason took account not of all men but only of the educated; and so on. I am inclined to think we have, with a few exceptions, much more faith in man than the Fathers had, and I think this is in some respects a sign of our progress.

Very likely, however, we do not have as much faith as our parents did: we know a bit more, we have seen a lot more, and our aspirations are hardly less. The New Deal and World War II gave many intellectuals and academic people a pleasant feeling of being close to the seats of power, of being in on big doings. To some extent this feeling was delusive—an aspect of the amiable come-on Franklin Roosevelt practiced with many different groups, from Groton graduates to Hollywood stars. Correspondingly, for all too many intellectuals it drew a connection between being influential and having self-confidence, a connection which any even temporary fall in the "market" might sever; in the process, enjoyment of study and intellectual functioning for their own sakes became too much devalued. The postwar inflation which has raised the level of living for organized workers, many small businessmen, and other groups has relatively squeezed our financial security at the same time that the intellectuals, still prominent but no longer so politically protected, have faced a new (but, I hope, presently receding) wave of loyalty oaths, investigations and other marks of special suspicion and special attention.

Even so, I am inclined to think that many intellectuals today, so far as I can judge their views, overestimate the monolithic power of reaction. Peter Viereck once remarked that anti-Catholicism is the anti-Semitism of the intellectuals. Certainly in many strata people like to exaggerate the Church's power, as in less educated circles they enjoy exaggerating the power of the Jews; very seldom can one hear or read much discussion about the cleavages within American Catholicism or read analyses of the great reservoirs of decency there—analyses which show understanding of the role of the Orders, of missionary parishes, et cetera.

Likewise, gloomy talk about the "Fascist menace" in America overlooks the fact that all efforts of Fascist groups to join forces have in the past come to nought because the very suspiciousness and paranoia which are the Fascist leader's stock in trade make it

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well-nigh impossible for him to co-operate with other salesmen on his side of the street—splinter movements seem endemic to "true believers." Moreover, our ethnic diversity, our regional and religious pluralism, our vested corruptions all tend to confine a fanatical leader to "his" people and section. While only the smug would assert, "It can't happen here," it does seem reasonable to assert that it is unlikely, and that the Nazi parallels that undoubtedly exist can be overdrawn. We are neither a small nor a defeated country.

The naming of evils, intended as a magical warding-off, can have the opposite effect. It is easy to imagine a group of academic people or civil servants sitting about in the hot summer of 1953 and swapping stories about who got fired from the Voice of America because he subscribed to *The Nation,* and how so-and-so was not rehired at Benton College because his wife had once joined the League of Women Shoppers—each capping the other's whopper of the reactionary menace. What is the consequence? A stiffening of spines? A clearing of the mind and will for action? I doubt it. If I may quote from an earlier article of mine—

> I often suspect that the people who tell such stories are, unconsciously, seeking to create a climate which will justify in their own minds the concessions they are making—or, sometimes, a climate which, being worse in those they have spoken to and convinced, is better "inside" than "out." That is, the person who tells such stories (and, as I've indicated, it doesn't matter that they are true stories, one must distinguish between the weight and purpose of different truths) can feel he is bowing to strong pressures when he himself for instance drops a friend who might be suspected of an undue interest in racial equality. . . .[1]

In short, intellectuals who, for whatever reason, choose to regard themselves as being victimized contribute to the very pressures they deplore. These pressures are not so strong as alleged; thinking them strong helps make them become so.

II

In a way, the attention that intellectuals are getting these days, although much of it is venomous and indecent, testifies to the great improvement in our status over that of an earlier day. What

[1] "Some Observations on the Limits of Totalitarian Power," *Antioch Review,* XII (1952), 156.

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might not Henry Adams have given for such signs of recognition! In his day the intellectual was no threat to anybody: whether clergyman or scholar, he had to defer to the "practical" men, the men of business and affairs. It is almost inconceivable today that a father should say, "Where Vanderbilt sits, there is the head of the table. I teach my son to be rich." In the much more fluid and amorphous America of our time, the writer, the artist, the scientist have become figures of glamour, if not of power. It is harder to say where the head of the table is. The practical, non-intellectual man feels uneasy with these changes; he resents the fact that his own importance as well as his own understanding of the world are threatened by the intellectual and the intellectual's ability to change ideas. There is a tendency for the older "class struggles," rooted in clear hierarchical antagonisms, to be replaced by a new sort of warfare: the groups who, by reason of rural or small-town location, ethnicity, or other parochialism, feel threatened by the better educated upper-middle-class people (though often less wealthy and politically powerful) who follow or create the modern movements in science, art, literature, and opinion generally.[2] In other words, anti-intellectualism has increased in this country in proportion to (although not only because of) the growth of intellectualism. City slickers are no longer only bankers, lawyers and drummers: they are drummers of ideas—that is, professors, teachers, writers, and artists.[3]

The reaction of many intellectuals to Stevenson's defeat may be taken as an illustration of my point about their real strength despite their professed weakness. They acted throughout the campaign as if *they* were up for election: they identified themselves with Stevenson's pathos as well as with his lovely wit. They saw the campaign through his eyes as an Oxford Union debate in which the opposition mulishly refused to answer "points" or explain contradictions. The same over-ideological outlook allowed them to be

[2] Cf. Eric Larrabee's discussion of the Gathings Committee majority and minority reports in "Obscenity and Morality," address to the American Library Association, Los Angeles, June, 1953.

[3] Many of the humanists are in a paradoxical position, for they suffer the vulnerabilities without attaining the glamour and glory of other academics—one reason, possibly, for their frequent very great resentment of their colleagues who lay claim, justified or not, to the mantle of science.

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bemused by the notion, so strenuously promulgated by F. D. R., that the Democrats were the party of virtue and progress, the Republicans of reaction. Surprised, as I hardly think they should have been, that Eisenhower swept the country, they felt they had been rejected. In their despair, they neglected the impressive fact that their man, their identity, had garnered over 27,000,000 votes against one of the most appealing candidates ever put up, and in spite of all the inherited handicaps of the Democrats. Perhaps, like any rising class, we intellectuals do not feel we are rising quite fast enough, and momentary setbacks unduly dismay us.

III

As one move toward greater differentiation, we should review some case histories of people who have refused to make concessions urged upon them, and consider whether and to what extent they have suffered for it. I think that such a study would show how, for instance, a professor can call and be called names and survive unscathed. A study of the reasons why Harvard, Sarah Lawrence, Chicago, and many other places have not succumbed to the first trumpet blasts of investigating committees would seem to me both more illuminating and more important than to add to the well-rehearsed choruses of academic degradation. Without doubt, liberals as well as fellow travelers are under attack in many parts of this country. But are these places where they were formerly secure?

I think it likely that liberals teaching in small colleges in fundamentalist or reactionary communities are still less secure now.[4] And such people do need succor and defense. Articles in Mr. MacLeish's tone may give such people succor through recognition, if not clarification, of their plight, through giving labels to their mood. But by and large I would assume that THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR circulates not in these areas, but in the larger centers

[4] A balanced estimate would have to take account of shifts in the issues, manifest and covert, to which the community is sensitive. In 1890, Veblen was refused a post at St. Olaf's College because he "does not see the difference between science and religion," and "would treat the historical content of the Bible as he would handle an old document that one might find in China." (See *Scandinavian-American Studies and Records*, XV, 1949, pp. 128-9.) Neither such views nor sexual irregularities would cause a professor similar trouble today. In our time, professors may have become conformists in many respects—there may be fewer "characters" among us—but I am struck with how many, provided they are anti-Communist, have held on to Marxist views without being vilified or pressured.

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where, in sizable groups, views such as Mr. MacLeish has expressed are not news. In these latter groups, there seem to exist a blind fright and frenzy about witch hunts, all committees and their membership being lumped together in a composite caricature.

From the Hiss case[5] we may perhaps date the beginning not only of the excessive power and renown of many Johnny-come-lately anti-Communists, but also, on the other side, of what might be thought of as a new united front in some liberal colleges and universities, admission to which is gained by denouncing witch hunts and refusing to co-operate with them. Much as the Communists were forgiven their earlier treacheries when they joined in the Resistance against the Nazis in occupied Europe, and indeed fought their way to leadership, so in the new American front the menace of McCarthy helps bring about a similar factitious solidarity among those who are sympathetic to, or apologetic about, or opposed to communism. In some colleges, professors who testify before the Velde or Jenner committees with dignity and restraint (often educating committee members in the process, as Hiss so notably failed to do) are slandered as appeasers. To the extent that Communists, by such tactics, can get non-Communists to claim the Fifth Amendment, they too can pass off their men as martyrs to principle. In the scramble, the real ethical problem—to what extent one should tell the committee not about oneself but about others—is obscured. The very term *witch hunt* is obscurantist.

It may be true that, as this new-found front gains momentum, in AAUP chapters and elsewhere, it will shift the context into which such articles as Mr. MacLeish's fall. While the view of America they bespeak is so dispiriting that in some circles a kind of

[5] I believe that Hiss, in his arrogant treatment of Chambers and the Congressional Committee, was doing the country a far more serious disservice than in his earlier, very likely inconsequential espionage and other efforts to influence foreign policy. If he had told the Committee, as less publicized witnesses have done since, how it happened that a more or less idealistic and successful young lawyer could get involved with the Communist Party, he would have contributed to clarification instead of mystification, and perhaps partially disentangled the knots of identification binding so many decent people to him and hence to the view that he was being victimized. It might have been revealed that his case had special elements (special guilts, special arrogances, special impatiences) and that therefore, despite appearances, it was not a generation on trial but a fringe. Perhaps Hiss thought he could brazen it out. As the square-jawed, clean-cut hero of the two, he would have a comic-strip advantage. Perhaps he was ashamed to disillusion his non-Communist friends and preferred to drag them down with him.

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internal neutralism may be encouraged—why defend freedom if it is already beaten?—in united front circles these writings may well stiffen resistance to loyalty investigations, and thus in some degree serve to strengthen academic freedom. But this might turn out to be an ambiguous dividend, won only because many professors will have become afraid of being thought scared, and because many who share Mr. MacLeish's premises will have concluded that any intra-academic dissension is treachery. In my opinion, achievement of this unaerated conformism under the banner of non-conformity would be a confession of academic defeat and vulnerability.

Even critics of articles like Mr. MacLeish's may fall in with this kind of "don't wash dirty linen" clannishness: they may fear that his attitude would encourage European and Asian neutralism. Doubtless, many Europeans are already too inclined to accept some American intellectuals' estimate of their own situation. (In our tradition, what is critical always seems more plausible than what is approbatory.) And since the Soviet Union, Red China, their satellites and mass parties remain the chief threat to freedom, such writers as Mr. MacLeish may be criticized for giving indirect aid and comfort to the foreign foe. But at this point, I would come to their defense and say that we are not so weak as to need a unity chorus at home to persuade intellectuals abroad to love and admire us! Since I share Mr. MacLeish's enthusiasm for freedom of thought and expression, I gladly take the risks of Europeans or Indians overhearing our conversation, and drawing their own conclusions—not the ones, I feel sure, that Mr. MacLeish would expect them to draw.

IV

It is characteristic of our times that we raise public-relations considerations, if only to reject them. I agree with the implication of Mr. MacLeish's article that we are not the men our ancestors were—we tend to be less rigid, more agreeable, more co-operative and conciliatory. In an earlier, less "other-directed" age, polemics could be carried on, as they still are among Europeans, with fewer restraints based on one's resonance with the other, one's awareness and sympathy and misgiving. Such "weaknesses," when judged by an older standard of intransigent self-righteousness, are among

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those that Mr. MacLeish would perhaps like to see expunged in favor of the Spartan virtues he attributes to an earlier America. In Lionel Trilling's novel, *The Middle of the Journey,* we can see the power of such virtues in Mrs. Croom or in Maxim, as against the hesitant and conciliatory Laskell, in whom all voices echo.

Yet if we are to find our way out of the tricky personal and social perils peculiar to our day, as well as out of those that afflict any given day, it does not profit us to strive for the moral athleticism and heroism that not even a William James could drill into us. We must work with the psychological tools available to us, and not waste time bemoaning the loss of those blunter ones our forefathers possessed. We know today, for example, that all communication is problematic, a trap of serried ambiguities and obscure consequences. One can hardly help bearing in mind for whom one is writing, even if one violently disagrees with Sartre's theory of "engagement." (I am aware that I am writing this for THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, not *Life,* the *New American Mercury,* or even *The New Leader.*)

However, a writer may make mistakes both about his audience and the pressures they are under: in aiming to challenge complacency wherever he finds it, he may instead strengthen it, or he may further harass people too wounded to listen.[6] I have often been in just this dilemma, as a result of the domestic repercussions of the cold war, in my relations with students and audiences. For instance, when I speak, usually on non-political topics, in the Midwest or in smaller communities in the East, someone is almost sure to ask out of the blue what about Owen Lattimore or don't I think America is going Fascist or something of the sort. Often he turns out to be a *Nation* reader, isolated and bereft, decent and dogmatic, frozen in middle life into what may earlier have been a less spiky carapace of liberalism. He has been waiting eagerly for the coming of light and learning from the University of Chicago to help lift the siege he has been laboring under among his townsfolk: he wants to be told that he isn't crazy, but that the others are. What am I to do when I share his associates' opinions of his opinions, if not of his character and motives? Am I to add one more blow to

[6] For fuller discussion of this problem, see my article "Values in Context," *American Scholar,* XXII (1952), 29, 34 et seq.

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his self-esteem? To deny my own principles to support his? The mixture of therapy with education is characteristic of our time, and we have no easy answer for a problem that would not have bothered the Victorians.

With students, similar problems arise. Before World War II, I had moderate good luck in getting totalitarian-minded students to chuck some of their stereotypes about America, even if they did not accept mine. When very little penalty, and often even kudos, befell the members of the Party-dominated student groups, I could attack their criticisms without seeming to attack them as individuals; one can do this with the young—their ideas are not affixed to them but are part of a diffuse process of development and discovery; individually, I could encourage them not to be intimidated by the fear of being thought bourgeois. They would not suspect me of worrying about the reputation of my university. Now, as I need hardly say, all that is changed. Radical-minded students have learned in high school or even earlier to be wary of adults; afraid of being seduced by expediency, they have put a kind of intellectual chastity belt around their views. Since some of the nobler-spirited young still want risk and emancipation fom parents, the educator who offers them a less clear and less violent set of ideas tends to be fanatically resisted.

Another curious kind of situation arises when the question of the books one uses in teaching comes under the scrutiny of an investigating committee. One of the general education courses in the College at Chicago was criticized by the Broyles Committee of the Illinois legislature because it assigned the *Communist Manifesto* and other writings of Marx and Engels. Before that, some of us had felt these works to be inappropriate for the particular course—for one thing, because the students had not yet had any historical background to understand the portrait of English industrial misery in the 1840's; for another, because we felt the course already too overweighted on the side of the "great books" as against more empirical or experimental materials. But ever since the investigation, the *Manifesto* has been frozen into the course: to replace it now would be regarded as a symbol of knuckling under to egregious, ill-meant criticism; and we and our students have become to that extent a captive audience.

While perhaps a majority of students in this course find Marx

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dull—in a way, they feel they know all that, and it's irrelevant—a minority feels called upon to speak up for or about Marx, lest they conclude they have betrayed themselves. I hesitate to put students into a position where they must make such a choice (our course is required), but would prefer to have them select their Armageddons at their own time and place. And this is one reason among many why I am opposed to most teaching of social studies in the high schools or earlier, for neither students nor teachers can be protected there against at least some kind of inquisition; the result will either be mushy piety or muddled bravado: in neither case will it be critical understanding. The schools, I think, would do better to teach subjects less vague and less inviting to censorship, leaving the social studies until later or for independent student exploration.[7] But again, the context makes it difficult to say this, or for the schools to do anything about their curricula, without being put in the position of seeming to bow to reaction, or to the intemperate attacks on John Dewey and progressive education. Thus, captive audiences spring up all around, precisely in the most advanced sections of the intellectual community.

I recall in this connection a conversation with the energetic editor of a liberal periodical who had suggested in one of his articles that there was something to be said for the investigating committees: they were not all vicious, and after all, Communist conspiracies had existed. As a result, he was bombarded by letters charging that now he, too, was betraying the cause, was giving in to hysteria, was leaving his loyal readers in the lurch. He *did* give in to hysteria—that of his readers—and decided to publish no more such articles. Who can blame him, for where will he find another audience if he alienates his present one?[8]

In sum, the current atmosphere tends to inhibit thought in ways

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[7] It is an ironic symptom of the vulnerability of the school system that even Mr. MacLeish, in search of an explanation for our "escape from freedom," turns at the end to attacking education! "The underlying failure," he writes, "is a failure of education." Educators are fond of this kind of boasting, which so greatly overestimates our role in the total culture.

[8] In her otherwise admirable article, "The Menace to Free Journalism in America," in *The Listener*, May 14, 1953, p. 791, Mary McCarthy goes too far, in my judgment, in seeing such instances of editorial subservience as typical. It has even become the formula of many magazines to provoke or needle their readers; and certainly many seek to stay ahead of them.

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other than those generally recognized. United fronts for political action are one thing: intellectuals need lobbies and pressure groups just as do other minorities who in that way contribute to the pulling and hauling of American politics; but united fronts for intellectual understanding are as impotent as for artistic creation. In that area, each of us must go it alone and, on occasion, even muster the courage not to take a stand.

V

But I would also maintain, at the same time and in the same connection, that the effort to rid ourselves utterly of cowardice is inhuman (it is analogous to the effort to rid the country utterly of corruption, communism, or McCarthyism). We must learn to fight battles while admitting our fear of the enemy, as the American soldier has increasingly learned to do. Otherwise, we encourage a needless martyrdom in some, and an excessive self-contempt in those many valuable people who cannot live up to the courage and stern morality our ancestors represent for us. A friend who recently visited some members of the New Deal government-in-exile in Washington wrote me that his own high spirits were taken as a kind of physiological affront. To be gay or glad about anything in these days is considered by many who share Mr. MacLeish's views to be a sign of idiocy, ill will, or both.

To be sure, the guilt for being well-off (or well-to-do) is a notable and not wholly negative feature of the American educated classes—we feel it vis-à-vis our own poor and vis-à-vis the ill-nourished of the rest of the world. Likewise, those of us who are reasonably safe from attack by school boards or investigating committees because, out of good luck, timidity, good judgment, or whatnot, we never flirted with communism, and because the hatred with which we have regarded communism is now widespread—we, too, do not feel quite happy in our security, even if we do not share the widespread conviction that liberals in general, as well as Communists and their fellow travelers, are being victimized. As intellectuals, we the "Pollyannas" inevitably and properly ask ourselves if we can be right when the country is in some rough measure with us and so many respected intellectuals are against us. In any case, we cannot but be sympathetic with the many decent people who

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are anguished, even if their anguish appears to us frequently self-defeating and the source for a monotonous set style of talking about America.

But I regret that they do not see that we in America now live in what in many ways is a great age. Terrible things are happening, but wonderful things too, and the former do not cancel out the latter any more than they do in one's personal life. The sudden rise of millions of people to relative affluence has intensified the struggle—no new thing in America—between the "old," Eastern-oriented merchant and professional middle classes and the "new," half-educated, small-business and small-town-manufacturing middle classes. In this confrontation, an astonishing number of the latter seek culture or worldliness in a benevolently energetic way —the heroine of *South Pacific,* for an exotic instance. But another group, as I have indicated above, feels put upon and dominated by the intellectuals who seem to control or at least understand the respectable and influential people, media and opinions; the very ferocity with which these anti-intellectuals sometimes try to outlaw the worldly and the educated is a sign of their resentment of their inferior status in the traditional hierarchies of prestige and comprehension. We are witnessing not only a tremendous increase in the number of intellectuals in the occupational structure, but an anxious resurgence of some aspects of Populism. This springs not merely from rural areas, so greatly diminished, but also from the half-urbanized and far from urbane city folk for whom nationalism provides an identity of sorts when all else shifts.

This is true not only of nationalism, but of other narrower groupings. The Pole in Cicero who has helped build a family, a parish, a neighborhood which Negroes threaten to invade, thereby evicting him (and where shall he begin over again?), may find in a crusade against intellectuals some surcease of his own guilt for his inability to sacrifice to the values of tolerance and charity that respectable teachers, media, and pastors urge upon him, much of the status which he has precariously erected. The violence of his response makes him at least momentary prey for politicians who refuse to abide by the orderly rules of their body, just as he wants to smash the orderly rules of property and mobility which permit anyone with the money to buy a house, and hence school his children, anywhere.

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Increasingly, Congress and our state legislatures have become more democratic, more representative, and less corrupt; they often speak for these previously underprivileged millions, and less often for the "wise, the good, and the [very] rich." By continuing to think of our country as banker-ridden or boss-ridden, we have sought not to recognize these sometimes tenuous changes in the sources of social and personal control of violence and impulse, or to find scapegoats in "demagogues" who whip up "the people," otherwise innocuous. Doubtless, demagogues play a part in "legitimizing" frictions within and among the Americans—and how should there not be frictions, with vast new populations entering the market for goods and ideas in little more than a decade?

These large-scale and scarcely understood changes and resistances to change in the bases of American life and allegiance are likely to have far greater long-run effects on the climate of freedom in America than the tendencies to conformism within liberalism to which this article has mostly been devoted. We should not allow short-run rises or falls in temperature, even while we suffer from them or oppose them, to obscure these climatic changes. But by the same token, we cannot predict the outcome of the complex, sometimes silent, sometimes vocal struggle against the influence and prestige of intellect and education, nor is there any course we can take which will guarantee victory to the scholar. However, in personal or political life I think there are limits to the usefulness of speculation on ultimate outcomes for oneself, one's group, one's nation, the white race, the Western world, or even the planet. Defeat is not the worst fate. The Athenians were "defeated." So were many other great civilizations. We must recognize the tragedy of every loss, every defeat, without banking too much on the quantifiable measure of longevity as proof of value. To become too fascinated by eventualities of destruction is not only not the way to ward them off, but a way to distract ourselves from equally important questions about America: Why, for instance, are Americans often so anxious and unhappy, when Europeans, who live much closer to military or economic disaster, are so sanguine in their personal lives, often expressing philosophies of despair with exuberant arrogance? Why are American young people so frequently aimless, lacking private passions and pursuits, when a greater va-

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riety of skilled careers is open to them than ever before? Why in intellectual circles is there so much malice, when there are jobs and prestige and tasks enough for everybody and to spare? The American culture—high, low and middle—nearly always lacks the gamut of qualities which our best and most creative spirits have evoked and represented, and the list of reasons for our not having become the promised land is endless—not to be dealt with by such general terms as "loss of faith" or "growth of reaction." Since small actions can have large consequences, the future of America is as bewilderingly open as the present is opaque. Nevertheless, it seems to me that individuals in America have still an undiminished potential for good and great, rich and fortunate lives. In living up to this potential, we express our freedom.

A Note

ARCHIBALD MacLEISH

MY DIFFICULTY IN FOLLOWING MR. RIESMAN is a result, I think, of the fact that his article reads a little like a controversy overheard in the next room: one never finds out who the other parties to the quarrel are or why the voice went up in the first place. So far as my own piece is concerned, he seems to have two objections to it, the first of which is stated precisely enough: he disapproves of my concern (at least in the columns of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR) with the current wave of attacks on the liberty of the individual mind and conscience. This concern, which he finds to be fairly prevalent among American "intellectuals"—i.e., Americans who read and think—he regards as based on an unworthy fear. As for the attacks, McCarthyism cannot, he assures us, be eliminated. The implication is that it should not be opposed—at least strongly—at least in this magazine.

Neither contention is very persuasive. Any man who mistakes for fear the indignation of those who detest and mean to oppose the increasingly shameless attacks on the American tradition of in-

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dividual liberty has a lower opinion of human nature and a feebler attachment to liberty than would seem justifiable. As for McCarthyism, the disease may be ineradicable, but it is precisely in the continuing struggle against it, in all its forms and at all levels of the national conscience, that effective freedom consists. The open-mindedness for which Mr. Riesman pleads is noble enough, but there are some things as to which an unwillingness or an inability to make up one's mind is not noble. The recent report of the special committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors on the questioning of the editor of the *New York Post* by Senator McCarthy will serve, in this connection, as a useful commentary on Mr. Riesman's views.

Mr. Riesman's second objection to my piece is not so clearly stated but apparently has to do with the fact that the argument is "hortatory." This impression is reinforced by the editor of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, who writes, in a letter addressed both to Mr. Riesman and to me, which summarizes the matter, that Mr. Riesman has expressed, in conversation, the view that my "Loyalty and Freedom" "represented a tendency among talented liberals and intellectuals to exhort rather than analyze." If this is the position, Mr. Riesman has a bear by the tail—a vastly larger bear than A. MacLeish or even the talented liberals and intellectuals themselves. In effect he is using my quite unworthy piece to challenge (on his own behalf? . . . on behalf of the social sciences? . . .) a kind of writing familiar to all literatures, of which Milton was perhaps the foremost practitioner in English, and to which Aristotle devoted a very famous book. The use of words to persuade has always been considered to include the use of words for analysis, but the proposition that the use of words for analysis should supersede the use of words to persuade is novel. If this is indeed Mr. Riesman's thesis, I should like to see it pursued, independently of personalities, at the high level where the discussion belongs and with the *Areopagitica* as proof and example.

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Education for Privacy

MARTEN TEN HOOR

IN VIEW OF THE HUNDREDS OF CONFERENCES which have been held on liberal education, it would seem to be impossible to say anything new on the subject. Since there seems to be nothing new to say, one must, in order to be original, be contrary, eccentric or partisan. I have chosen to be partisan. The proposition to be defended is, frankly, a half-truth. If it can be established, there will be some cause for satisfaction; for the establishment of a half-truth is not a bad average in this complex and confused world. There is the justification, moreover, that the other, and possibly the better, half has in our day had practically all of the attention.

Stated concretely, the proposition is this: Never in the history of the world have there been so many people occupied with the improvement of so few. To sharpen the point by a specific example: Never have there been so many people making a good living by showing the other fellow how to make a better one. If you are skeptical, I recommend that you try this exercise—add up, as of the current date, the social workers, planners and reformers; the college presidents, deans and professors; the editors of magazines, journals and newspapers (not forgetting college newspapers); almost everybody in Washington, D.C., during recent years; and the tens of thousands of miscellaneous social-minded folks who attend conferences, workshops and institutes organized for the improvement of the human race. Subtract that figure from the total population of this country, and compare this figure with a corresponding figure for, say, the year 1900. You will then see what I mean when I say that this is the era of undiscriminating allegiance to good causes. To come nearer home, compute the sum of all college and uni-

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versity presidents, deans and professors who have in the last five years attended meetings devoted to the improvement of education. Compare that figure with the number of those who remained on the campus working and you will find proof even *in academia.*

As further evidence, and as a striking symptom, there is the recent popularity of educational surveys. Most states and many institutions have experienced several. I have lived through eleven, without noticeable improvement in myself or my neighbors. Note the procedure and the technique, for there you will find the moral. The surveyors are always from another state or another institution. This is in accordance with the well-known principle that an expert is an ordinary person who is away from home. These outsiders are brought in because of their objectivity, objectivity being the capacity for discovering faults abroad which you cannot recognize at home. To be a good educational surveyor—or any kind of social analyst, for that matter—you must have a sharp eye for foreign motes but a dull one for domestic beams. You must be a contented extrovert, so that, after diagnosing the faults of others, you can continue to live in perfect comfort with your own.

I must confess that I view all this indiscriminate altruism with a jaundiced eye. It does seem to me that these days there are too many leaders and too few followers; too many preachers and too few sinners—self-conscious sinners, that is. If this were an illustrated article, I would insert at this point a wonderful cartoon I saw not long ago. A little boy was asking an obviously astounded and embarrassed father, "But if we're here to help others, what are the others here for?" Nobody has time these days to improve himself, so busy is he with attempts to improve his neighbor. There is something wrong with that equation. It seems to me that it is time to try to balance it. I suggest that this can be done by shifting some weight from one side to the other, by shifting the emphasis from social improvement to self-improvement. I suggest that over the door of every academic cubicle there should hang the sign which Thoreau had over the door of his hut: "*My* destiny mended here, not yours." In short, I propose to make a plea for *education for privacy.*

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Before undertaking to identify some of the elements of this type of education, I should like to offer some justification of my skepticism concerning the present emphasis on social-mindedness in education. To begin with, it is so easy to assume that your neighbor is much worse off than yourself. The universality of this tendency is undoubtedly accounted for psychologically by its attractive by-products. The assumption produces a feeling of comfort. If there is some slight suspicion that all is not well within, it is compensating to concentrate on the plight of one's neighbor. Since attention to him is distracting, it keeps the individual from worrying about himself. To do something about a neighbor's ignorance also makes one feel virtuous. This absorbing concern for the improvement of one's neighbor is undoubtedly a product of civilization. It is doubtful if primitive man worried much about it. The cannibal, in fact, represents the other extreme: he uses his neighbor solely for his own improvement.

In the second place, I doubt if the reformer always has the wisdom necessary to direct the lives of so many people—but this is certainly assumed. How many people are there who have demonstrated the capacity to prescribe for others? If an individual makes a mistake in trying to improve himself, this is not so serious; but consider the consequences if he has induced all his neighbors to do the same thing. History is filled with examples of self-confident leaders who led their followers straight to a common catastrophe. The fact is that we still know so little about human personality in the concrete. To be sure, there are excellent textbook pictures, with revealing analytical tables and graphs. But this is personality in the abstract. Any physician will tell you that he rarely finds a textbook picture in a patient. Not only is every human being a complex with variations, but there are the environment in which that complex functions and the accidental circumstances which confuse the vision and disrupt life.

Nor has the reformer too much reason for assuming that he has discerned the good life for his neighbors. Let us take as a familiar example the characteristic projection by parents into the lives of their children. This is something we can readily understand and,

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because it is suffused with parental affection, forgive. But how many parents are there who realize that each child is to some extent a new complex of elements and who can bring themselves to substitute that confounding reality for the fond subjective creation? Too often the recommendation of a way of life is nothing more than the advocacy of a personal preference.

From subjectivism in this sense of the term there is no complete escape. Even leadership is personalized in an individual. Hitler was an individual: he spun his fantastic and criminal notions out of his own warped private personality. It is therefore terribly important that everything shall be right in the reformer before he undertakes to reform others. "Nobody," says a character in Norman Douglas' *South Wind*, "has the right to call himself well disposed towards society until he has grasped the elementary fact that the only way to improve society is to improve oneself." And may I suggest in this connection that a major in the social sciences does not automatically qualify a student for social leadership?

Further reason for doubt is to be found in the characteristic reactions of the hypersocial-minded. They become so indignant when people resist their ministrations. They are so determinedly selfish in their unselfishness. Ideas, particularly ideas designed for the improvement of others, so quickly become inflated. In extreme cases they devour themselves. How antagonistic even educators become over professional differences as to how the ignorant should be rendered less so! Note the bitterness between rival reform groups. Let us not forget that human beings have killed one another in the mass even on the authority of their religions. Note how political leaders fall out, quarrel, conspire, injure one another in their unselfish efforts to save the country. In the absence of sophistication and modesty, reform notions grow into delusions; their advocates become more and more autocratic; leadership becomes pathological; the desire to help one's fellow-men is transformed into fanaticism and tyranny—and societies become authoritarian.

Here lies the explanation of the tendency of hypersocial-mindedness to suppress individualism and to produce too much uniformity. There are good reasons for doubting the wisdom of this lack of interest in the individual as a unique personality. There is, to be-

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gin with, the obvious and inescapable fact that everybody is an individual. The higher the scale of life, the more individuals differ and the greater their potentialities for differing. Society must make provision for individual differences. Authoritarianisms of the type of national socialism and communism are primitivistic, for they propose to turn back the course of social change and to establish societies in which individuals shall have a status more closely resembling that of ants, bees, or even of atoms or electrons than of human personalities. They have forgotten, or propose to ignore, the incontrovertible fact that the great works of art, literature, music, philosophy, religion and science—that is, the world's great manifestations of excellence and leadership—were the products of intensely individual persons. Indeed, some of the world's great geniuses have been self-centered, unsocial and iconoclastic, with little or no interest in the improvement of their fellow-men.

But society can well afford that. A regimented society will not only suppress and possibly ultimately breed out these "exaggerated" individuals, but will generally discourage the manifestations of the adventurous and original spirit. Government and education designed to do this will bring about a tragic cultural impoverishment in human life; for individual differences enrich life, they stimulate the intelligence and the imagination, and they invite comparison and criticism. They keep the individual alive *as an individual,* and not merely as a bearer of the racial genius or a servant of the state.

It is true that modern life requires a certain amount of regimentation. Individuals obviously cannot be permitted to run amuck. At least the great majority of persons must adapt themselves to other persons. Mechanical contrivances, such as traffic lights, must replace individual judgment; laws are to some extent substitutes for individual choice. But let us not forget that it is not the basic purpose of these substitutes to repress individuality, but rather to make possible a more general and richer realization of individuality. It is not the purpose of social organization to reduce man to the subhuman, but to create more favorable opportunities for the realization of what is uniquely human.

The need of complex societies for a high degree of organization is one reason why so much attention is focused on the improvement

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of the other fellow. Especially in a democracy, where everyone is more or less free to advocate schemes for the improvement of society, lively and self-confident minds are inclined to expend their intellectual and emotional potential on reform movements. The attention of the reformer is consequently drawn away from contemplation of the state of his own soul. Since he is so happily exercised in improving others, the habit of self-examination gradually atrophies. How then can he be sure that he is the right person to prescribe for his neighbors? Should he not stop now and then to take an inventory of his resources? Does he in fact have these resources? It is because I have serious doubts of this sort, and because of the increasing neglect in education of attention to the accumulation of these resources, that I feel it time to make a plea for education for privacy.

What now are the essential elements of this education for privacy? In speaking of elements it is of course implied that the ideal construct of these elements constitutes an organized whole, a personality. It is this ideal at which we aim, though we know full well that in any concrete individual, no matter how well educated after the formula which we shall propose, one or the other desirable characteristic is certain to be under- or overemphasized.

The first requirement, clearly, is to learn how to think—not out loud or in print, but privately. The thinker himself, not his neighbor, is to be the beneficiary. To think does not mean to spend hours in idle daydreaming or in vagrant imaginings, or to make occasional impulsive sallies at ideas which happen to appear before the attention. The reference is certainly not to the semi-somnolent and comfortable ruminations which go on in the wandering mind of an inattentive student in the classroom. What is meant is systematic reflection, the constant purpose of which is to bring order out of the multiplicity and variety of things in which the human being is immersed.

To be sure, many people go through life with their senses alert, observing and savoring in generous measure the richness of the world about them. But what they experience they retain only in the form of materials for recollection. The mind gradually ac-

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cumulates a rich inventory of goods, which can be brought out on display when there is social opportunity for it. But the relationship of these resources in the mind is one of mere contiguity, like that of goods in a department store. Experience has not resulted in an over-all understanding because it has not been systematically thought about. Such individuals

> . . . see all sights from pole to pole,
> And glance, and nod, and bustle by,
> And never once possess [their] soul
> Before [they] die.·

To possess one's soul in an intellectual sense means to have found some answer, or partial answer, to the questions: What is the nature of this world in which I find myself, what is my place in it, and what must be my attitude toward it? The problem is one of intellectual and spiritual orientation.

The benefits of such intellectual and spiritual adaptation have been extolled by the wise men of all ages and all countries. A "view of life" prepares us for what life brings us, for what happens to us in our physical environment, and most important of all, for what people turn out to be and for what they do. To be spiritually and intellectually lost in the world, on the contrary, is to be unarmed and helpless. A disorganized mind is unprepared for reality and easily frustrated. The fate that awaits the individual so afflicted is to be always a stranger and a wanderer in the world. The "lost soul" of literature, the ultimate in tragic creation, suffers from this great spiritual illness.

It may be unfortunate, but it is a fact that the sharper and livelier the intelligence and the more sensitive the spirit, the more serious the danger of disorientation. The simple-minded find life simple. Plants find themselves easy to live with, no doubt; for it cannot be difficult to vegetate successfully. It is not likely that the cow's ruminations are philosophical. Man, for better or worse, is a rational animal. The more he thinks, the greater the need of organization among his ideas. The more subjects a student studies in college, the more extensive the potential disorder of his mind. It is not surprising that the scholarly mind, lost in a Babel of learning,

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seeks escape into a clearly defined speciality, and the practical mind, as soon as its owner has permission, into the comforts of a business, a profession, or domesticity. To be sure, we must integrate the curriculum. But what good is this if the professor's mind remains perched on its gaunt pinnacle or secluded in the laboratory?

The systematic way to the attainment of the organization of ideas is through philosophy and religion. It is true that the great intellectual constructions of the metaphysicians are not available to all men, and that even to the initiated they sometimes offer but poor comfort. Moreover, all of us have known individuals of great simplicity and humbleness of mind, quite untutored in dialectic, who somehow and in the simplest terms have securely located themselves in the cosmos. Especially in the realm of religious experience do we find examples of this. The spirit seems to have found peace in terms of some all-embracing conviction or great renunciation. But this is not often possible for the inquisitive and analytical mind. To cast all burdens upon the Lord in one grand resolve sometimes implies ignorance of the nature of those burdens. There is only consciousness of their oppressive weight, but no understanding of their nature or causes. To be sure, the critical intelligence may also come ultimately to make this renunciation, but it will not feel justified in doing so until it has reflected upon causes and relationships and seen the problem of human trouble and sorrow *whole*. The solution must be a conquest, not an escape.

For this, the mind certainly needs philosophy, sacred or secular. No learned profession, however, can offer the inquiring mind an official formula which every man need only apply in order to be permanently on understanding terms with the world. To be sure, there are systems of metaphysics, sacred and secular, from which the troubled spirit can choose a ready-made synthesis. But this does not make the chosen system of ideas an integral part of the inner personality. Intellectual orientation to the world must be something more than an acquisition; it must be an organic growth. The student should by all means seek out the great religious and philosophical thinkers, study their systems, and add their insights to his own. But in the last analysis he must work out his own solution, for such a solution must be the end product of his *own* reflection in the

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context of his *own* experience. Only through the alchemy of private reflection do philosophical ideas become private resources. Only then will they be available in time of crisis. When the normal course of existence is interrupted by conflict and frustration, it is a bit late to begin developing fundamental guiding ideas; that is the time to apply them.

A dramatic example of the saving grace of such resources is related by Admiral Byrd in his book on his expedition to the South Pole, entitled *Alone*. He had been left behind by the expedition in a dugout located several feet below the surface of the icecap. From this he periodically emerged through a vertical tunnel to make scientific observations. It happened that the heater in his subterranean shelter developed a leak of which he was not aware. Before he realized it, he had been dangerously poisoned and he became seriously ill. During his convalescence he found himself struggling to overcome not only the physical damage done to his body, but also a deep spiritual depression, an obstinate conviction of the meaninglessness of life, which threatened to overwhelm him. There was no physician or psychoanalyst or cleric available. His fellow-explorers would not return for months. He was absolutely *alone*. He had to guide himself out of this slough of despair. This he did, after many agonizing days, by steady thinking, by "digging down into" his intellectual resources. And it was then, to use his own homely but vivid phrase, that he "uncovered the pay-dirt of philosophy." He did not then collect the materials of his readjustment; he used them to recover his sanity. In this crisis, what would he have done without these resources?

But periods of crisis are not the only time when man needs an orderly mind. If a ship is to hold its course it needs a steady helm in good weather as well as in bad. I hasten to remark that this figure of speech has serious limitations, for a navigator has his chart prepared when he begins his voyage. Man, on the contrary, is faced with the problem of making a chart as he goes along. As a matter of fact, the plan of life is for every man to some extent an unconscious precipitate of his experience. We are not completely free agents: compulsion and fate, in the form of the physical world, our fellow-men and social institutions, push the individual this way

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and that. What happens to him and what he becomes are clearly the result of a complex of inner and outer compulsions, over many of which he has no control.

We are not here primarily concerned with action, however, but with interpretation. In philosophical reflection, the individual to some extent plays the part of the Greek chorus. He observes himself as actor in a cosmic setting. If he does so systematically, he will gradually discern not only his own role, but the direction of the whole drama. Only when he understands the meaning of the play can he orient himself in it. Such an understanding, vague and incomplete though it may be, will enable him to achieve his own view of life. If he is so fortunate as to see (what seems to him) the truth and to see it whole, he will thenceforth have a vision of the future as well as an understanding of the present and the past. If a rational man does not do that, why should he consider himself the crown of creation? If he does accomplish this, he can exult with the poet Dyer:

> My mind to me a kingdom is;
> Such present joys therein I find
> As far exceeds all earthly bliss
> . . . . . .
> Look, what I lack my mind supplies.
> Lo, thus I triumph like a king,
> Content with that my mind doth bring.

In education for privacy, however, more is involved than philosophical orientation to the cosmos. There is equally urgent need for education in the establishment and maintenance of moral harmony. From the days of primitive religion, through Greek tragedy, the Christian epic of sin and salvation, and modern psychology, Freudian and non-Freudian, to contemporary existentialism, there runs the theme of the uneasy conscience. The dramatic specter of moral guilt is the principal character in many of the greatest creations of literary genius. No matter what the learned explanation, the psychological state is one of inner moral disharmony. Though it may have outer causes, it is a private affliction and must be cured privately. In moments of despair or periods of cynicism we may doubt the existence or discernibility of moral meaning in the universe; but such a conclusion does not relieve the individual of the

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necessity for solving his personal moral problem. Even complete moral negativism, if not itself a moral philosophy, leaves the individual no recourse but to establish a private moral order in his life of action and reflection.

Here again, the more sensitive the individual, the greater the potentiality for disorganization. It is the sensitive who are the most deeply wounded by moral indifference, disorder and brutality. The predisposing causes of moral disorganization may be in the people and the things we love, in the institutions which demand that we conform to their customs and taboos, in the great world which so often mocks our need for moral significance and order. But a vision of the good life, the spirit must have; for devoid of it, the imagination is without moral perspective, conduct without guiding principles, and action without trustworthy habits. For an individual so unprepared for life, confusion will efface meaning and create frustration, with the onset in the case of the unusually sensitive spirit of pathological disturbances which may for a period or for a lifetime destroy happiness. Education for privacy must therefore include the education of the moral personality, the gradual acquisition by the self of moral resources. Here, too, there are available to the student in generous measure the works of the great philosophical and religious thinkers, for probably no one of the persistent problems of life has had more of their systematic and concentrated attention. It is relevant here to note that the previously discussed philosophical orientation to the world is sometimes the foundation for moral orientation.

A third requirement in the education of the personality is the development of emotional stability. Of all the immediate causes of unhappiness, emotional disorder is unquestionably the most serious and the most common. Currently there is a feeling that under the pressures of modern life its incidence is steadily increasing. Unfortunately, emotions are the component of the personality about which we know the least, as modern science has come to realize. Our ignorance is largely a consequence of the fact that traditionally the emotions have been considered to be effects rather than causes. Preoccupation with the flattering conviction that man is a rational animal has been attended with the assumption that therefore our

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emotions are under the domination of the reason. This assumption has been one of the basic tenets of formal education, though puzzled parents and self-conscious adults no doubt have all along had their suspicions. In our day, educators are being enlightened by psychology and the medical sciences on the subject of the devastating power of the emotions. Moreover, the modern conception of the integrated personality has redirected our approach to this subject, so that now we hypothesize and investigate in terms of interrelations and interactions. The simple classical vision of the reason enthroned in the psyche, making judgments, issuing commands, and directing the conscious life of the individual, is difficult to maintain in the face of the past record and the current spectacle of human behavior.

Let us grant that the contemporary individual lives in an age in which, as Goethe put it, "humanity twists and turns like a person on a sickbed trying to find a comfortable position." To offset this, however, he has the advantage of a better understanding of the compulsive and disruptive power of the emotions. He is aware of their insidious tendency to direct his thinking and affect his judgment. He knows that they feed on themselves and that, if they are of the destructive kind, they can bring him to the verge of despair. He knows that they can completely disorient him, isolating him from the friendship and sympathy of his fellow-men and estranging him from the beauty and utility of the world. He must learn that there is little he can do to remove the external causes, the irritants in his social and physical environment. In order to maintain or restore emotional stability *within* himself, he must learn to control the effects of these irritants *on* himself. Education of the emotions is education in self-control, in equanimity and serenity.

To these three objectives of education for privacy—the attainment of a philosophical point of view, a steady vision of the good life, and serenity of spirit—I should like to add one more: the individual should be able to live entertainingly with himself. He should accumulate resources on which he can draw when he is at leisure. The universal symptom of the absence of such resources is the homely but hapless state of boredom. It is an anomalous condition of the spirit, a state of indifference lying between pain and pleasure. Neither the mind nor the hands can find anything inter-

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esting to do. In contrast with the other troubles of the spirit which have been mentioned, there is little excuse for this great emptiness. For there is a marvelous cure for boredom, universally available, readily tapped and virtually inexhaustible: the fine arts.

This claim hardly needs defense. Nor is it necessary to enumerate the arts and to identify their respective potentialities for beguiling the mind and the heart. For illustrative purposes, however, let us consider one form of art enjoyment which is available to virtually every normal human being, young or old, learned or simple, saint or sinner—reading. Its great virtue for education for privacy is that it is a strictly private experience. No other human being is necessary to the reader at the moment of reading. He can take his book with him to the jungle or the desert, on the ocean or the mountain top. He can select his company at will, and rid himself of it by a turn of the hand. It is potentially an inexhaustible resource: all ages of history; all countries; all varieties of human beings, and even of animals and plants and physical things; the entire range of human thoughts and feelings, hopes and fears, conquests and failures, victories and defeats; the real and the ideal—all are available at the turn of a page for the reader's contemplation and understanding.

When we measure the impoverishment of him to whom this world is literally and figuratively a closed book, whose ear is deaf to music and whose eye blind to the glories of painting and sculpture, we come to realize the responsibility of liberal education for instruction in the arts. I say instruction purposely, because I believe that the presentation of opportunities for enjoyment and training in appreciation are not enough: there should also be instruction and encouragement in the production of art. As even the bungling amateur knows, there is no greater source of pleasure than creative activity. The training of the most modest talent is an enrichment of a personality and develops another private resource for leisure hours. Even the unsuccessful attempt to create art, moreover, clarifies the understanding of art. To be sure, just as it is not necessary to trouble our friends with our thoughts, so it is not necessary to bore our friends with our productions. It is, after all, not the improvement of the neighbor but the improvement of oneself that is the immediate object of education for privacy.

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An understanding of the world, a vision of the good life, serenity of spirit, appreciation and practice of the fine arts—these, then, are the elements of the integrated personality, the development of which is the immediate object of liberal education. These are the resources which are accumulated in the course of education for privacy. Why, now, is it so important for every individual to possess these resources? In the first place, simply because he is going to need them. We never know when we are going to lose our external resources, our public possessions. Without private resources the individual has nothing to turn to when disappointment, frustration or misfortune become his lot. In the great depression which is still vivid in our memories, there were many individuals who possessed only external resources. When they lost these, life was over for them. They could not go on living with themselves because of their intellectual, moral, emotional and artistic poverty. He who possessed these resources, however, could exclaim with Thoreau: "Oh, how I laugh when I think of my vague, indefinite riches! No run on the bank can drain it, for my wealth is not possession but enjoyment."

Resources of the spirit are like savings: they must be accumulated before they are needed. When they are needed, there is no substitute for them. Sooner or later, the individual faces the world alone, and that moment may overwhelm him if he has no resources within himself. Distraction helps but little and betrays us when we least expect it. We can escape our physical environment and our neighbors, but we cannot escape ourselves. Everyone with any maturity of experience and self-knowledge knows that the loneliest moments are sometimes experienced in the midst of the greatest crowds and the most elaborate entertainments. ". . . the man at war with himself is at war, though he sits in a garden surrounded by flowers and singing birds," says the novelist Cloete in *Congo Song*.

And now, in conclusion, I wish again to pay my respects to the other half-truth, the improvement of others, which was so cavalierly dismissed in the beginning of this essay. That objective together with the other objective, self-improvement, compose the whole truth, which is the grand objective of liberal education. Education

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for privacy and education for public service constitute education of the whole personality. He who is not educated for privacy is hardly fit to educate others. The blind cannot lead the blind. The man who is not at peace with himself cannot be trusted to lead his fellow-men in the ways of peace. The unbalanced leader is certain to unbalance the society in which he functions. Even the leader who is in intent on the side of the good but who is a fanatic will stimulate fanaticism in his followers, arouse dogmatism and bigotry, and induce oppression and cruelty. When he is on the side of evil, he will lead his followers into such excesses and wickedness as will shame all humanity, and which even the innocent will wish to forget as soon as possible. Social pathology must in the last analysis be focused on the sickness of the individuals who compose the society. It is pure imagination, if not nonsense, to ascribe the ignorance, unbalance and wickedness of a collection of human beings to a mysterious social entity such as the group mind or the social organism. We might as well divorce the concept of an epidemic from the notion of the individuals who are ill, or ascribe hunger to a societal stomach. People mislead one another exactly as they infect one another. The psychopathic leader is potentially as dangerous as the carrier of an infectious disease.

The safe leader, in terms of the elements of education for privacy, is one who understands his place in the world and can thus envisage the place of his fellow-men; who can morally respect himself and can thus be respected by others; who has learned to control his emotions and can thus be trusted to exert control over others; who has learned to live in peace and contentment with himself and can thus with propriety urge others to do likewise.

We are living in a world and in a time when powerful leaders with millions of fanatical followers are committed to the forcible regimentation of their fellow-men, according to formulas which have no initial authority but that of their own private dogmatism. They not only refuse to recognize the right of private thought and personal conscience to be considered in the management of public affairs, but they have abolished the concept of the individual as a private personality and have reduced him to the level of the bee in the hive. To restore the individual to his former dignity as a

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human being is the urgent need of the day. This, in my opinion, should be the special objective of contemporary education.

But liberal education must so educate the individual that he is manifestly worthy of having his dignity recognized. If he wishes to lead his fellows, he must first learn to lead himself. Without education for privacy he will neither merit leadership nor learn to recognize it in others. He will strive in vain for happiness and success in private or public life until he has achieved understanding, goodness, serenity, and contentment within himself. That, according to my exegesis, is in this connection the meaning of the Biblical text: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" It is surely what Thomas Hardy meant when he wrote:

> He who is with himself dissatisfied,
> Though all the world find satisfaction in him,
> Is like a rainbow-coloured bird gone blind,
> That gives delight it shares not.

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Souls Among Masterpieces

The Solemn Style of Modern Critics

WALLACE W. DOUGLAS

AFTER SOME THOUGHT, but without, of course, pretending to exhaust the possibilities, I have finally decided on two sentences as my favorite examples of the rich and complex solemnity of modern critical writing. One sentence is by F. R. Leavis:

> There is, too, Emily Brontë, who has hardly yet had full justice as a poet; I will record, without offering it as a checked and deliberated critical judgment, the remembered impression that her *Cold in the earth* is the finest poem in the nineteenth-century part of the *Oxford Book of English Verse*.[1]

The other is by Arnold Stein:

> Wyatt seems to me the most important neglected poet of the English Renaissance.[2]

Of course I am fond of others, like this one:

> One can, in view of the body of poetic and historical documentation of the human encounter of love, broadly and perhaps a bit vulgarly distinguish three phases with respect to its consummation: a before, a during, and an after.[3]

Or this one:

> It is necessary, however, to consider the sexual aspects of a poet as related to his larger context. As Galsworthy has aptly pointed out in the preface to *The Forsyte Saga*, where sexual attraction is lacking, there can be little adjustment.[4]

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[1] F. R. Leavis, *Revaluation, Tradition and Development in English Poetry* (New York, 1947), p. 6.

[2] Arnold Stein, "The Criticism of Wyatt," *Kenyon Review*, XIII (Autumn, 1951), 703.

[3] Robert Roth, "The Sophistication of W. H. Auden: A Sketch in Longinian Method," *Modern Philology*, XLVIII (1951), 197.

[4] Donald E. Hayden, *After Conflict, Quiet* (New York, 1951), p. 176.

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Or this one:

His book is marked by many striking insights, some tantalizingly undeveloped, like Mr. Turnell's realization of the essential homosexual resonances in the *Liaisons Dangereuses*. . . .[5]

Each of these sentences has its own special charm, though on the whole a rather limited one, in spite of magnificent expressions like "human encounter of love" and "homosexual resonances." At first glance there might be a temptation to give high marks to them as worthy examples of opacity. But a second glance would show that they exemplify only the scientific diction of modern critical writing; and to be really perfect, they would need at least an overtone or two of the plight of man. So I come back to the sentences by Mr. Leavis and Mr. Stein as much more representative of current tendencies in critical writing.

Mr. Stein's sentence is short but by no means simple. On the surface he seems to be only setting up a new category for criticism —that of the "important neglected poet." But under that more intensive scrutiny which all serious criticism deserves, he is seen to be isolating[6] himself and his sensibilities from the pedagogical tradition (which he notices by citing the comments on Wyatt in some of the standard anthologies), if not indeed from the Tradition itself, since without some subject or agent for "neglected," the reader has to conclude that Mr. Stein is alone in his appreciation

[5] Leslie A. Fiedler, "The Critic's Excluded Middle," *Kenyon Review*, XIII (Autumn, 1951), 696.

[6] Quotation marks can accomplish the same thing; compare their effect in the following sentences from Clifford Amyx, "Max Beckmann: The Iconography of the Triptychs," *Ibid.*, 610, 611, 612, 613.

"If we are convinced that painting is no longer a matter of the 'pure eye,' as artists wanted it to be in the late 19th Century, and that it cannot be a pure didactic or 'instructional' instrument such as it may have been in earlier centuries, we are compelled to accept today some variation of a 'presentationalist' aesthetic. The painting is 'all there'; it may be seen."

". . . when the work will be seen from that 'distance' at which iconographers ordinarily approach their subject."

"Beckmann has been accepted as one of the major painters of our time in spite of certain acknowledged 'difficulties' in meaning and imagery."

"[Beckmann's paintings] have a complexity and 'ambiguity' comparable to much contemporary poetry."

"A painting can 'communicate' before it is fully 'understood'. . . ."

"The figure in the upper left [of the left panel in *Departure*] is wholly 'detached' by virtue of an enforced solipsism. . . ."

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of Wyatt, confronted by the insensibility of Mr. Eliot, as well as of Lieder, Lovett and Root. Indeed, the sentence may perhaps be even richer, since its rhetorical form seems to suggest that Mr. Stein and his *aperçus* are an island of light in a naughty world, surrounded by Saturday Reviewers of Literature, professors, and the dark ranks of Philistia, people who live in nasty little villas and belong to the Book-of-the-Month Club.

Mr. Leavis, too, is trying to make up a tradition for a poet. And like Mr. Stein, he asserts his perfect isolation from all those who have not had the wit or taste to give "full justice" to Emily Brontë as a poet. Right here Mr. Leavis proves that he is better than Mr. Stein at playing with the mannerisms of modern critical style. For with the expression "full justice as a poet," Mr. Leavis manages to suggest not only simple-mindedness in those who think of Emily Brontë solely as a novelist, but also a very real culpability. And this melodrama is further exploited in his offer to "record" merely a "remembered impression," not a "checked and deliberated critical judgment." Here Mr. Leavis is expressing that moral struggle, that enormous effort of pain and plight and glorious discovery with which modern critics color the (otherwise insignificant?) business of talking about and explaining books. As a solemnity, the result is especially good because it is written in a prevailingly flat, commonplace diction.

Most solemnities, one notices after a while, get their effect from a more vivid, even lush, diction than Mr. Leavis'. By now, cant adjectives like *rich* and *complex*, which are part of the traditional vocabulary of criticism anyway, no longer cause much surprise, however their meanings may be strained in the actual use. But there still must be some shock-value, I should think, to the more exuberant words that violate what an eighteenth-century critic would have called decorum. Thus, in a seriously philosophic review of a number of books concerned with semantics, there are references to "that proto-modern bulldozer *The Meaning of Meaning*," to "such pantry-maids as economics and sociology," to Gertrude Stein's "method of lumbering indirection and pseudo-litany [which] sometimes yields chubby half-truths," and to poetry being treated as "the beautician of nouns." These are good

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phrases, and they add life if nothing else to a style that is otherwise filled with words like *semiotic, iconic, energy-tension,* and *technosophic,* in contexts which are not necessarily so technical as to require them.[7] But the life becomes pretty faded when we read of a "highly charged tension between more or less incompatible meanings—between 'being' in the sense of plain empirical existence and 'being' in some incompletely defined sense that plows up our ordered reality-perspective in struggling for birth."[8]

I suppose I should not object here to stylistic devices I would applaud in Shakespeare; and indeed, this sort of vigor, this nervousness and copiousness is certainly more tolerable than the wide-ranging borrowings from popular science or philosophy that the critics have to use to get at their very intense insights into literature. Thus *stasis* (a modern medical term, returned presumably to an original Greek literary usage) gets used for any pause or condition or state,[9] and *resonances* (appropriated from classical physics, with perhaps a reference to Professor Pawling's theory) is used for what once were called overtones or suggestions.[10] And there is talk of surface and extension, of tension and balance, of structure and texture. But these words—whatever their technical resonances—

[7] "When the technosophic mind does not, like Professor Carnap, go to the length of denying that poetry can have meaning and truth of its own, it may, in the very concessions it grants, reduce the poetic mode of expression to something misleadingly simple or even embarrassingly fatuous."

"The real distinction between simile and metaphor is one of intent, depending on whether the trope is just a lazy attempt to get rid of a problem or is a challenge to a new problem, opening it up, expressing it, and keeping it alive in a metaphoric 'energy-tension,' manifested as a rule in the total context, the entire process of language, and not confined to a single word or phrase." The review referred to is by Philip Wheelwright, "Symbol, Metaphor, and Myth," *Sewanee Review,* LVIII (Autumn, 1950), 678-98.

[8] *Ibid.* Or am I missing some sort of classical allusion in that rather disordered figure that joins plowing and struggling for birth?

[9] "The youthful, fiery Prometheus tries to warn the Old God that all is not well, that he must meet life's dangerous challenges, that he must break the comfortable stasis into which he has settled." Richard Chase, "Melville's Confidence Man," *Kenyon Review,* XI (Autumn, 1949), 135.

"Jerry's frantic philosophical quest . . . covers pretty well worn ground so that, despite its intensity, it can let the story down into a stasis. . . ." Robert B. Heilman, "Tangled Web," *Sewanee Review,* LIX (Winter, 1951), 109.

[10] Compare with Mr. Fiedler's comment, p. 44; also this one: "Intellectually, [the liberal] preserves himself from self-knowledge by refusing to admit that moral choices have far-reaching consequences and that thought, no matter how ordinary or work-a-day, has its complex resonances of moral, mythical, religious, and cultural meaning." Chase, "Melville's Confidence Man," 138.

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are at least decently part of the general vocabulary. Other and more offensive words the critics have to borrow from just that jargon which as humanists they must of course complain of in the sociologists and psychologists:

> [Iago] positivizes [love] into sex, into a series of cataloguable and manageable phenomena, involving chiefly the principles of satiety and variety. . . . Like all debunkers, Iago is partially correct; his view of the facts of sex has considerable soundness. But his mistake—and it is a philosophical mistake which must be distinguished from his mere efforts to destroy—is to confuse the facts of sex with the myth of love.
>
> Specifically, [Lear] tries to measure his daughters' love; he tries to quantify it; he tries to secure a rational computation of what is not susceptible to this kind of estimate. . . . But in his passion to measure he is asking for quasi-logical prose formulations that are irrelevant and impossible.[11]

"Positivizes" and "quantify" are certainly bizarre; and I cannot find the adjective to describe an expression like "quasi-logical prose formulations," especially when applied to the action of the first scene of *Lear*. In the following, presumably the thought and its underlying melodrama are too complex to be carried by ordinary English idiom:

> One does what one can. John Ransom and Allen Tate, for example, around the gaps of the unstatable tremendous, are models of the uncontrollable in pseudo-control.
>
> The general poetry at the center of our times [takes from the work of Emily Dickinson] spontaneous snatched idiom and wooed accidental ineluctableness.[12]

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[11] Robert B. Heilman, "The Lear World," *English Institute Essays 1948* (New York, 1949), pp. 50, 51-2.

If, as I have heard colleagues say, sociology deals either with false problems (presumably problems not known to Cicero) or with obvious facts (presumably those known to Cicero), what is one to say about this list of the "four threats to illusion from which Shakespeare's mythical trajectories begin"? I list the threats in my own words, and thus may lose some of the implications of the original: (1) the actors were known to be merely actors, not the persons they portrayed; (2) women characters were played by boys; (3) the dead turn out to be alive, the actors rise for applause; (4) the play ends. The conclusion is that Shakespeare's "immediate problem was to deceive his audience." Leslie Fiedler, "The Defense of the Illusion and the Creation of Myth," *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

[12] R. P. Blackmur, "Lord Tennyson's Scissors," *Kenyon Review*, XIV (Winter, 1952), 15. In a review in the *Times Literary Supplement*, January 9, 1953, p. 21, "spontaneous snatched idiom and wooed accidental in*duc*tableness" is cited as an example of Mr. Blackmur's ability to make a phrase that "makes a complicated perception precise." The word is set as "inductableness" also in Mr. Blackmur's *Language As Gesture* (New York, 1952), p. 435.

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Myth, in its union with logos, comprises the totality of human existence. To achieve the reflection and substantiation of man's existence, it is bound to tend toward a totality, a conception implying an order so all-embracing that it becomes a cosmogony, a "creation." All myth culminates in cosmogony. It is the prototype of the inexpressible; it is primitive, yet of an inimitable simplicity. None of the mythical derivatives originating in later epochs of mankind, whether scholarly historical research, or historiography with its varieties—biographical and otherwise—or historical fiction has ever been or can ever become cosmogony. And yet, owing to their mythical heritage, they all aspire to a totality of a cosmogonic kind so as to become genuine creation.[13]

In the same way, I find it difficult to know what is meant by "The result is a totality, that refuses to be stricted to any one attitude," or by a "little but exceedingly dimensional story," or by a reference to a fictional method that can "implicate" two tendencies while transcending each.[14] With its slightly high melodrama, such diction as this seems to me to interfere with orderly communication.

II

Like Mr. Hubler, I "sometimes find our critical journals subtle to the point of secrecy"; and though I do not share with him the energy or the sense of responsibility which makes him, he says, rewrite an occasional paragraph to see what the words are all about, I am perfectly willing to accept his conclusion that, after the experiment, he finds that the "restated paragraph is not only clear, it is commonplace."[15] This makes me wonder why the critics do not, in his phrase, have the courage of their simplicities. Would it be possible to answer that they are not aware of any simplicities in their criticism, because for the most part they are not talking about books or about their experience with books, or are doing so only in the first instance, and then not for very long?

[13] Herman Brock, "The Heritage of Myth in Literature," *Chimera*, IV (Spring, 1946), 34.

[14] Eunice Glenn, "Fantasy in the Fiction of Eudora Welty," *A Southern Vanguard*, ed. Allen Tate (New York, 1947), pp. 78-91. Elsewhere in the article Miss Welty's work is compared to *Ethan Brand, The House of the Seven Gables, Pilgrim's Progress, Gulliver's Travels*, "the rich prose of Sir Thomas Browne," seventeenth-century poetry, and to the work of Kafka, Proust, and "other best writers of this century."

[15] E. L. Hubler, "Three Shakespearian Myths: Mutability, Plenitude, and Reputation," *English Institute Essays 1948*, pp. 95-119.

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On the whole, I prefer this to another explanation that might be offered, that the critics strain their diction in a disingenuous attempt to conceal the simplicities that Mr. Hubler notices. A gracious substitution of *unconscious* for *disingenuous* might, as a matter of fact, make this a tenable notion, for then the following argument could hold. It is clear that modern critics feel to the point of obsession that they must avoid relativism, with all its connotations of modernity, scientism, and ethical nihilism. They also want to escape any contamination by the exclamatory, appreciative criticism of, for example, Saintsbury or William Lyon Phelps. As they keep saying, they want to write objective criticism, to talk about facts, about the concrete, the particular, the verifiable, the hard, the limited, the real. And I suppose it is this odd subservience to a naive conception of the scientific method and to a kind of critical positivism that makes a modern critic talk about the "ominously uncapitalized" sentence that begins the fourth section of Faulkner's "The Bear," and note that "Faulkner has even gone to the extreme of employing the single inverted comma in the conversations of the fourth section: the conventional sign of the speech contained within the speech—as against the double comma elsewhere."[16] It would be difficult to imagine any part of language more coldly real than punctuation marks.

In this intense struggle to write objective criticism, to discuss only the real and the verifiable, the critic might easily, and more or less unconsciously, fall into the habit of formulating more or less scientific problems[17] in more or less scientific language; in this

[16] R. W. B. Lewis, "The Hero in the New World: William Faulkner's *The Bear*," *Kenyon Review*, XIII (Autumn, 1951), 649, 651.

[17] Cf. above, n. 11, the "problem" of the four threats to the illusion of Shakespeare's "mythical trajectories." Also this description of poetic composition, or rather, of the epistemological process behind the composition: "The poets therefore introduce the psychological device of the miracle. The predication which it permits is clean and quick but it is not scientific predication. For scientific predication concludes an act of attention but miraculism initiates one." (John Crowe Ransom, "Poetry: A Note in Ontology," *The World's Body*, New York, 1938, p. 142.) The load of connotation on "miracle" and "miraculism" does not at all change the fact that these sentences presuppose the early positivistic analysis of Richards, with its talk about "aesthetic" or "projectile" words and its distinction between "cognitive" and "expressive" uses of language; and so ultimately any criticism derived from these assumptions would consist of a description of the nature and quantity of neuropsychological changes effected by the poem, as a stimulus in the mind, as a series of measurable responses.

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case, the subject of investigation being unhappily a crude, unmeasurable thing like a work of literature, the formulation is generally sociological or anthropological in reference, though the language may be drawn from any one of the exact sciences. For example, note how a critic validates the simple, empirical observation that he is bored by repetitiousness: "The repetitiousness with which the boy has evil thoughts and then feels contrite cannot help being monotonous since these incidents do not exfoliate anywhere except in local metaphor."[18] Obviously the critic wanted to ground in a general law his own reaction of boredom to a repetition which another critic might have regarded as repetition for emphasis, or adroit repetition with variation—in which case, interest, not boredom, would have had to be given some kind of objective cause or general existence. In the given sentence the critic first introduces the notion of a statistically verifiable, though still empirical, observation, which is then given greater authority by the suggestion of biological law included in the word *exfoliate*, a technical term for a natural process.[19] The result is to suggest that there is more to this critical observation than just impressionistic or appreciative yawping.

This effort to make criticism objective or scientific will explain the plain tone and borrowings from scientific vocabulary, but not, of course, the peculiar idiom and melodramatic undertone of modern criticism. Here, for example, is a critic commenting on two lines from "The Dry Salvages":

> The salt is on the briar rose,
> The fog is in the fir trees.

The two together make an image, and in their pairing reveal, by self-symbol declare, by verse and position unite, two halves of a tragic gesture.[20]

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[18] Richard Chase, "Sense and Sensibility," *Kenyon Review*, XIII (Autumn, 1951), 689.

[19] Since the word means "slough, peel, or flake off," I find the statement on the whole quite baffling. I do not see how anything could flake off into anything, except perhaps a tub. Does the sentence mean that the incidents do not develop (assuming that *exfoliate* has somehow been confused with *foliage* so as to mean "break into leaf") into anything except local metaphors—whatever they are? No doubt *local* is some kind of metaphor (national? universal? general?) used to give a sort of physical reality to metaphors.

[20] Blackmur, "Lord Tennyson's Scissors," 2.

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The simplest explanation might be that this critic just happened to like the sentence structure of Gerard Manley Hopkins. But I think that more is involved, and so I come back to my first proposition, that the style of modern critics has developed as it has because the critics are not in fact talking about books or about their direct experiences with books, but rather about secondary experiences or attitudes, which exist for the most part quite independently of the books which are supposed to demand them.

III

In the first place, these people are always talking about being critics, a job of enormous complexity and intense significance—no less than "the job of the schoolmaster," teaching "a generation how to read that has been taught that literature is anything but what it is." The job, they say, is a difficult one, "which cannot be done with Arnold's or Pater's language,"[21] for literature, or what they see as its content, is intractable; it can be said to make fierce and impossible demands on metaphor and myth, to assault the sensibility, "either investing it or sacking it";[22] it is constructed of images, which (in contrast to ideas or conceptions) are natural or wild and obey their own laws, being "things as they are in their rich and contingent materiality," arrayed in "their panoply of circumstance and with their morning freshness upon them." And there is a terrible struggle of the image to protect itself against the Platonism in all men, even poets—a Platonism "which is militant, always sciencing and devouring," trying to take the image captive, to beat it into submission, deprive it of its original state of freedom, and turn it into mere idea. The struggle is joined —weakly, it would seem—by man's "starved inhibited aspiration towards innocence which, if it could only be free, would like to respect and know the object as it might of its own accord reveal itself."[23] If this sort of thing should be taken seriously, it would go far to prove both M. Lévy-Bruhl's contentions about the primitive

[21] Eliseo Vivas, "Criticism and the Little Mags," *Western Review*, XVI (Autumn, 1951), 12.

[22] Chase, "Sense and Sensibility," 688; Blackmur, "Lord Tennyson's Scissors," 6.

[23] Ransom, *op. cit.*, pp. 115, 116, 130.

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mind and the theories of a mythopoeic age that Cassirer and Mrs. Langer have derived from them. Or at least if there's all this *mana* in the content (or is it the form?) of literature, it's easy to see how, if not why, the critic soon becomes not only schoolmaster but also priest.

From the strict point of view of literary criticism it must be insisted that the miraculism which produces the humblest conceit is the same miraculism which supplies to religions their substantive content. (This is said to assert the dignity not of the conceits but of the religions.) It is the poet and nobody else who gives to the God a nature, a form, faculties, and a history. . . . The myths are conceits born of metaphors. . . . Religion depends for its ontological validity upon a literary understanding, and that is why it is frequently misunderstood.[24]

From this point of view—I do not know why it is especially "strict"—discussion of literature becomes an act of supreme importance, the reiterated holy moment of a consecration.

The profundity of Yeats's vision of the modern world and the depth of its perspective have kept me until this occasion from writing anything about the poetry of our own time which I most admire. The responsibility enjoins the final effort of understanding—an effort that even now I have not been able to make. The lesser poets invite the pride of the critic to its own affirmation; the greater poets—and Yeats is among them—ask us to understand not only their minds but our own; they ask us in fact to have minds of a related calibre to theirs. . . .[25]

I cannot pretend to examine here Dante's double imagery in all its detail, for Dante's light alone could lead us into complexities as rich as life itself. I had almost said richer than life, if by life we mean (as we must mean) what we ourselves are able daily to see, or even what certain writers have seen, with the exception of Shakespeare, and possibly of Sophocles and Henry James.[26]

And it is just because the moment and the act are holy that the language becomes, in a strict sense, hieratic.[27] Modern critics place

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[24] *Ibid.*, p. 140.

[25] Allen Tate, "Yeats's Romanticism: Notes and Suggestions," *Southern Review*, VII (1942), 591.

[26] Tate, "The Symbolic Imagination: A Meditation on Dante's Three Mirrors," *Kenyon Review*, XIV (Spring, 1952), 256-7.

[27] The critics sometimes talk as if something had happened to the modern mind to prevent most of us from understanding them. For example:

"The symbolic imagination takes rise from a definite limitation of human rationality

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a value on criticism greater even than that announced for it by Arnold, the great Victorian (and therefore unacknowledged) source for this aspect of modern critical thought.

Modern critics are perhaps also a little like Arnold in never quite keeping their attention on the poem (as a poem), but instead always drifting off into attacks on the eighteenth century, because it was rationalistic; or the nineteenth century, because it was optimistic; or the Renaissance, because it forgot the medieval heritage; or Protestantism, because it isn't at least Anglo-Catholicism; or the American liberal mind, because "it has no idea of its own momentousness or of its own tragic career," lacks the "rich extension" of the myth of the Fall of Man and "the symbolic polarities of light and dark, space and time, father and son, which derive from it," and isn't doing enough to discover the true sources in the American past of "our new liberalism of the nineteen-forties—of which in political theory Mr. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., is the most brilliant spokesman."[28] "I would not," one critic announces, "for a minute pretend solidarity with men who do not realize that one of the essential marks of decency today is to be ashamed of being a man of the twentieth century."[29] And a couple of others ask their readers to accept the statement, "In many respects, the elaboration of Biblical teaching developed in the thirteenth century schools was history's most significant intellectual achievement."[30]

Sometimes it seems to be only a lack of manners that separates

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which was recognized in the West until the 17th Century; in this view the intellect cannot have direct knowledge of essences."

"Catholic poets have lost, along with their heretical friends, the power to start with the 'common thing'; they have lost the gift for concrete expression. The abstraction of the modern mind has obscured their way into the natural order."

I do not know whether these two sentences refer to the same thing, but when "symbolic imagination" is defined as bringing "together various meanings at a single moment of action," I have to conclude that the thing in question is pretty much equivalent to Coleridge's "secondary imagination," and that the poetic phenomenon it produces is probably the same one he was pointing to in the famous passages on *Venus and Adonis*. The sentences are from Tate, "The Symbolic Imagination," 260, 261-2.

[28] Chase, "Melville's Confidence Man," 138, 139.

[29] Eliseo Vivas, in the Preface to his *The Moral and the Ethical Life* (Chicago, 1951), quoted by Hyatt Howe Waggoner in *Western Review*, XVI (Autumn, 1951), 92.

[30] D. W. Robertson, Jr., and Bernard Huppé, *Piers Plowman and Scriptural Tradition* (Princeton, 1951), p. 235.

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this "most distracted of all eras since the collapse of the Roman Empire"[31] from the great ages of history:

> They [one of the important critical groups] understood the language of one another, and by *language* I mean the primary ways in which we think about Religion, the people with whom we live, and about the relation of the individual to the state. . . . They did not, for example, write in wry amazement to their parents back home when they heard a student say "Yes, Ma'am" to an older lady, saw him remove his hat when any lady entered an elevator, or bounce out of his seat and bow slightly when he noticed any person considerably older than himself standing up in a street car. No ice had to be broken on questions of fundamental good breeding, which is perhaps the first and simplest way through which people come to comprehend one another.[32]

At other times the decay is seen as all-pervasive, reaching from Teachers College to the Civil War and on to the mind of man itself:

> —the technology of the North (with its epiphenomenal art and *belles lettres*) was built on the most destructive aberration of the Western mind—autonomous dialectics and ontological nominalism. The fact of the matter is that one phase of the Civil War is being fought over again in the North today. President Hutchins is merely the most vociferous member of a large party which is embattled against the dialectics and educational technology of John Dewey and Sidney Hook.[33]

The most extraordinary example that I know of this worship of the Spirit of Times Past is one in which the critic first quotes a letter of St. Catherine of Siena, in which she describes how she gave spiritual comfort to a young prisoner condemned to beheading. At the block she extended his neck, and when the blade had fallen, she caught the severed head: "When he was at rest my soul rested in peace and quiet, and in so great fragrance of blood that I could not bear to remove the blood which had fallen on me from him." And the critic remarks, "St. Catherine had the courage of genius which permitted her to *smell* the Blood of Christ in Niccolo Tuldo's blood clotted on her dress: she smelled the two

[31] Richmond C. Beatty, "Donald Davidson as Fugitive-agrarian," *Hopkins Review*, V (Winter, 1952), 13.

[32] *Ibid.*, 12.

[33] Herbert Marshall McLuhan, "The Southern Quality," *A Southern Vanguard*, p. 112.

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bloods *not alternately but at one instant,* in a single act compounded of spiritual insight and physical perception."[34] (The italics are the critic's.)

There was a moment when "the Hellenic race was marked off from the barbarian, as more intelligent and more emancipated from silly nonsense," said Herodotus. And though by temperament and training I am quite unadjusted to the sort of scrubby ecstasy apparently felt by this critic when he discovered St. Catherine's letter, I can see that this passage has some importance as marking a climax in the long, dark and fairly dismal drama that modern critics are always writing about. For it is that drama and this kind of spiritual insight that finally explain the pervading tone of modern critical style. The critics have inflated their language and turned their business into melodrama in order to give importance to an otherwise inconsequential occupation. They have developed a woolly cant so as to communicate with the other participants in the mystery, and an inhumane jargon to get at the objectivity of science, while all the time asserting their peremptory claim to a grander knowledge. Their tone, though—the portentous imitation-mysticism, the blood-and-thunder language of sin and salvation, the conviction of being among the elect—these they have made up as they follow along the glory trail, circuit riders of literature, revivalists of criticism, missionaries of a bleak and desperate back-country religion, whose tears wet the mourners' benches in a dozen critical reviews.

[34] Tate, "The Symbolic Imagination," 262-3.

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To a Quaker Lady

JON SWAN

I can not win thee, Friend, not thee
With words, who sees adjacent, such
Heaven as we enter death to see,
Who in a silence hears as rich
Conviction as a pulpit sings,
Not thee with words I'll win.

But if in silence, harmony
With patience sit, or maybe pray,
Be such deep music and I'll be
Mute, providing but a key
That softer aspiration brings,
And with a song, begin.

✪ JON SWAN has returned to this country to work with the American Friends Service Committee, after teaching with Paul Geheeb, German educator, in the École d'Humanité in Switzerland. This is among his first published poems.

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Alaskan Summer

Leaves from a Candid Journal

F. FRASER DARLING

June 1, 1952. We have left the Olympics and the Cascades behind and the busyness of the straits of water between Seattle and Vancouver, the weather has faded out the landscape and we just sit for hours in the DC_4, five abreast, waiting to reach Alaska down there where the sun isn't shining. My stomach tells me we are descending, the sun goes as we bump into the clouds—oh misery—and then a rift discloses a mountainous landscape of the kind I know well, for here are the West Highlands of Scotland all over again, acid rocks, an acid vegetation, the drowned coastline and not only the evidence of glaciation but glaciers as well.

We crocodile out of the plane at Juneau and look around. It is the same forlorn scene as if I were looking across from Ballachulish to Kingairloch. The rain is the same, the temperature is the same, the latitude is almost the same, and doubtless many of the problems of Juneau as a human habitat are the same.

Thirteen miles into Juneau, passing a tidal grass flat where 20 or 30 Guernsey cows are grazing. They look better than most cows I have seen stateside, and the good Swedish barn expresses a confidence in the future. My colleague Starker Leopold and I share a room at the Baranov, $10. It is an excellent hotel, and I marvel to myself as ever at the American capacity to do things well in out-of-the-way places.

✪ F. FRASER DARLING is a British author and ecologist. He was a Rockefeller Special Research Fellow in 1950, and is a member of the Scientific Advisory Council of the Conservation Foundation. It was on behalf of the latter body that he visited Alaska in 1952 with Dr. A. Starker Leopold to make an appraisal of the wild-life situation. These notes are excerpted from the diary which Dr. Darling kept at that time.

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We stroll downtown to get some late lunch and go into a dive complete with soda fountain and juke box. Good choice of food and a cheerful woman serving it; our change in silver dollars. Sunday being a day we could have to ourselves, Starker and I walk uphill into the forests of Sitka spruce and hemlock. My education in Alaska had begun. Here was a coniferous forest as it should be, not sterile-floored and black-dark like a spruce plantation in Britain, but a place of beauty and grace, softened by a rich shrub and field layer—a branching *Vaccinium* new to me, a rose-colored *Rubus* and a wild strawberry. Beauty and ecological repose are one.

The birds are new, but Starker knows them—the varied thrush, chestnut-breasted and black-collared; the blue grouse booming in the great spruces; and a lovely little warbler newly come, greenish with black head and eye-stripe. Life was good once more and seemed to be continuing from last Sunday afternoon when I had had tea at home 7,500 miles away in an old English rectory garden where the nightingale sang as if to wish me Godspeed. But now there was no sun and we had climbed to the snowline.

June 3. Chichagoff Island today. We flew in yesterday and joined the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service patrol ship *Grizzly Bear,* and have cruised round these forested coasts, going ashore from time to time. What wealth this forest is! Alaska, as America's last frontier, is in an interesting situation. The philosophy and practice of conservation are practical politics now, and Alaska has the chance no other new country has had, to put conservation into practice *before* the catastrophes of exploitation. Everywhere else the idea has come afterwards and the journey back is long and hard. There are plenty of people itching to get their claws into these southeast Alaskan forests, but the federal government is doing a fine job of holding tight, and where a logging concession is being made, as down at Ketchikan, the contract is being tied up on conservation principles so that the forest shall be a continuing resource.

Cribbage is Alaska's card game. Yes, I have played it; taught by my grandfather, but a long time ago. All right, I succumb to the engineer-cook-steward's persuasion, and take three games off him.

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Aha! we've heard of that British capacity for understatement. Not at all; I was brought up to being dealt five cards, throwing out two to the crib. Here you are dealt six cards and keep four to play with. It makes it too easy.

We put in at a little shack and a smokehouse near a salmon trap: "Burns is the name, Richard Burns, born in Georgia," says the old bachelor. "If you guys like to go over there and see a Canada goose's nest by an otter's den, I'll get my teeth in so's I can talk to you, and I'll pick you some young rhubarb." The cairn of rocks near the goose's nest was an otter town and must have held a dozen of these playful creatures, evidently to the delight of the gentle Mr. Burns.

The old man was picking red sweet stalks of rhubarb about as thick as a pencil. "I'm not really a fisherman, but I'm watchin' and figgerin' it out. Guys around here don't tell you much and I have to learn my own way. If I'm doin' sump'n and I sees a fella smilin', I knows I'm doin' it wrong someways, so I watches out on that pretty doggone careful next time."

June 7. In Anchorage after 800 miles through clouds and rain. Cleared a little as we came down low to fly across the Copper River flats, which are miles and miles of gravel braided by innumerable channels of the river. I was going to say it was desolation, but not so, for down there was a mother bear and her two cubs scooping salmon out of the water—salmon, the main export of Alaska to the value of a hundred million dollars.

A double room has been booked for us at a first-class hotel, $14 a night. We are in a boom town of nearly 30,000 people pressing into accommodation fit for about half that number. Yet the town spreads its unsightly squalor over many miles of country, shacks, hovels and super-apartment buildings. There is a hurdy-gurdy below our window, blaring Strauss waltzes far into the night. The town is full of hard-faced types talking contracts and dollars, and the dust is frightful. Everywhere is gravel and huge earth-moving machines and the air weeps dust. No rain here and what a lovely country! If you get out of the dust the air is fragrant with the open-

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ing balsam poplar, *trichocarpa*. But round any corner you may be invited into Alf's Place or Dinning Rooms (how true, for the juke box penetrates as far as the dust).

June 8. A 20-mile walk today up the Eagle River which flows down a great glacial valley covered in woods of balsam poplar, birch, willow, aspen and black spruce in the muskeg. The moose are numerous and obviously overbrowsing the willow. Predatory animals are being killed out and the Eagle River valley is closed to moose shooting. The two notions don't add up.

June 10. A day of days in the life of a naturalist. The sun was bright at 3.0 o'clock this morning in McKinley Park, at almost Latitude 64°N. We motored far into the Park, reaching an altitude of 4,100 feet on Sable Pass. Here the mountains were yellow, with harlequin snowfields, an entirely new landscape for me; yet holding a bird I knew well, the rock ptarmigan, sitting white on the snow, its crimson eye-ceres like little flowers.

How often have I wished to see the Highlands of Scotland as they were 10,000 years ago, a relatively short time after their emergence from the Quaternary ice! That vision has been granted now, with the ptarmigan before me on the snow as a sweet and living link in time and space. I look across the Toklat River and see a flat expanse of gravel two miles wide between the mountains. Here was a highland strath of 10,000 years ago, waiting for its capping layer of finer alluvium before the grass and trees could flourish. And the higher winter temperature, of course. That too will come in its own time and then Alaska will be ready for Western civilized man. At the moment she is too new and cannot stand the wear which man given to aggregation is attempting to put upon her. Alaska is too tender yet.

The mother grizzly bear with her two cubs playing in a snowfield make sheer delight; a big lump and two little lumps, but in movement how supple and fluid. The mother sees us but does not bother. Then the cubs see us but have no innocent lack of fear. Instead, they scuttle to the lee of the vast bulk of their mother. What now?

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The seconds tick by and four little ears appear above the back of Mama, four little eyes and two little noses. We are under observation from the age-old safety of the maternal skirt.

The caribou beginning to move across the Park help to dispel the illusion of linear time from my mind. We have lost them at home these thousand years and all we can do is raise in wonder a blackened antler from the bog.

Since long before Alaska was reality to me, I had longed to see the white Dall sheep. Its cousin the Bighorn was familiar already, but the whiteness which is not albinism has its own beauty. Expectancy did not prepare me for what I saw in that first flock of ewes and lambs. These were sheep in the heroic mould. Their faces were gentle but not sentimentally silly as in so many domesticated breeds. Each step they took was beautiful to watch, their muscles showing and not hidden by wool or fat. Later I was close to some full-grown rams and felt that the Dall sheep were indeed sheep in the ideal of the philosopher, occupying the niche to which they have evolved, the hard, high ground of short, sparse herbage. (That habitat is not unlimited in Alaska, and as I traveled over so much of the country in the four months I was in the Territory, I felt that any great increase in numbers could neither be expected nor was to be desired. Wild sheep, like any others, do best when they are not stocking their range to capacity. It is almost certain that the high numbers of the 1920's took their natural consequence in the crash of the early 1930's.)

The humbler members of this great fauna of the Park took up much of our time. Who can stay a smile at the busy, hay-making pika? Then a small porcupine walked across the gravel near tufts of withered grass and as he moved, and the wind moved the stalks of the grass, you saw how like were the grass and the little northern porcupine.

June 15. We are free of the nightmare environment of Anchorage and have flown through Rainey Pass and down the Kuskokwim River to Bethel. The railway from Seward to Fairbanks, and latterly the Alaska Highway, have taken away the former importance of the

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great rivers of Alaska as highways. Bethel doubtless had a reason for being there when the Kuskokwim was the road. Now, there would seem to be none, but Bethel goes on, a collection of poor shacks on piles to keep them out of the water—for the river floods the site after the breakup—two or three stores, a hospital, and an air strip over the river. You can't say Bethel has been left high and dry in the march of progress; rather has it been left behind in a slough of despond, with a tuberculosis rate around 30 per cent of the native population. The heaps of empty cans on vacant lots apparently have prestige value for those who sling their refuse on these cairns of the new age. The squalor of Anchorage is short-term and there is determination to overcome it, but in Bethel it is normality, past, present and future. Point Four could start right here.

I got out of the village after a few boss shots, for the swamp is so close about, and got on to the wide tundra northwards where, a couple of miles from Bethel, I found a little knoll quite two feet higher than the rest. There I sat in the evening sunshine enjoying the sweet air. The terrain was as much like the great northern bog of the Outer Hebrides as anything I could imagine, except that on this knoll there was a willow bush three feet high and a dwarf birch a foot or so. The sheep of the Outer Hebrides would never have left such succulence unbrowsed. The pipits sang their little song like our pipits, and there was the long-spurred lark trilling also. I heard a willow ptarmigan in the distance calling as do our red grouse, and a snipe drummed high above. His drumming is a little higher pitched than ours, but his chick-chacking when he comes to earth is just the same.

We spent the night in a shack kept by a half-breed. His wife sold ice cream and fizzy soft drinks and played the juke box. There was nothing wrong with the *spirit* of their hospitality and because of that I would have smiled through a lot worse, and our night's doss was only $2.50 apiece.

Next morning as we were about to fly off the river in the Fish & Wildlife Widgeon, a young half-breed came to the water's edge to talk to me; a fine clean-cut youth he was, whose farthest journey in his life had been to Anchorage. He had a good, eager intelligence;

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"I read and read," he said, "but I can't get it all sorted out."

"Tell me about your Queen. How is she different from President Truman?"

I tried to explain the principles of monarchy as we understood it, spiritually and constitutionally. The passage of royal blood through 1,500 years impressed him.

Next the socialized medicine: would our new government throw it out? I told him it was accepted in principle by all parties and would certainly not be thrown out, though there could well be modification.

"We have bits of it here among the natives of Alaska, but it doesn't get to the root of the trouble. What's the good of hospitals if you leave folk living in these conditions?"

He pointed to three separate shacks. "In each of those there's someone about to keel over from tuberculosis."

I was sorry to leave that boy.

Two hours' flying from Bethel and we are watching the ice floes on the Kashunuk River, which leads to the Bering Sea. Dave Spencer, pilot-biologist, is completely unhurried as he looks down wondering where he can make it. We are in an area of low tundra as big as mainland Scotland, empty of men except for a very few Eskimo families. This immensity of flatness is something new to me, but more dramatic still are the thousands of geese here for the nesting. The day and night are never quiet for their cacophonies—emperors, cacklers, whitefronts and brants. This is one of the great goose nurseries of the world, unknown till the Fish & Wildlife Service found it a few years ago. The geese are not all, for there are trillions, almost, of phalaropes, sandpipers, turnstones and other waders. And the sandhill cranes, the flight, call and behavior of which exercise a strange fascination. (Three months later, at Big Delta in the interior, I saw 300 of them as a flock ready to migrate. They rose higher and higher till the sun shone golden on their undersides; then they took up a treble V formation and flew away southeastwards.) I saw two Arctic hares here, about as big as a gazelle and probably faster.

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June 20. We flew from the Kashunuk River tundra across part of the Bering Sea to Nunivak Island yesterday. Here are 1,200 square miles of dry basaltic tundra carrying a population of 225 Eskimos, 4,000 reindeer and 75 musk oxen. Administration is a credit to the United States and the Alaskan Native Service. The main "industry" is the reindeer herd, the increase of which is slaughtered, processed and frozen in a most modern corral and handling plant. The resident engineer-*cum*-administrator was Fred —how different from the notion of a British Colonial Service native commissioner, but Fred had what it takes for the job. You could see how the folk trusted him, and the children adored him. Fred was a fine man, from whom you could get reliable knowledge on archaeology and folklore, who could get the most out of a work team, who would never spare himself. The United States might well pick out its Freds, if Nunivak is to be the pattern of native administration, whether Eskimo or Indian, in Alaska or Arizona.

The Eskimo has emerged from the Stone Age as a superb craftsman. Here on Nunivak you can examine an everyday sealing outfit on the tiny bone-runnered sledge which is carried on the front of the kayak; you can look closely at the construction of the kayak, for the beautiful frames are at this season stripped of skin and set up on stands, and you can turn over in your hands some pieces of ivory carving as sweet to the touch as a Chinese jade. The Eskimo's hands can take hold intelligently of 20th-century engineering, and in the Arctic there are Eskimo foremen responsible for hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of Diesel equipment, doing a fine job. Nunivak Islanders get immense sport out of buying the highest-powered outboard engine and fitting it to the lightest, slimmest dory that would float if you wiped it underneath with a damp sponge. There are two speeds, all-out and stop, and as the outfit hydroplanes over the water at high speed, the Eskimo smiles happily.

The reindeer situation on Nunivak is a microcosm of what has happened all over western Alaska. Carrying capacity of the range was misjudged and techniques were not advanced enough to see that the deer were eating themselves out while yet increasing their

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numbers. That is one of the tragedies of pastoralism the world over: deterioration of the range and the condition of the animals do not keep in phase; then suddenly the herds crash. Wolves and poachers, sometimes where they do not exist, are blamed rather than the plain fact of a beaten-up range. There is no lichen range left on Nunivak, so a very much reduced herd must continue to live on dwarf willows and sedges.

June 25. We flew over Bristol Bay on the first day of the salmon fishing season. There must have been a thousand boats down there, large and small, and as we learned later, they trailed 87 miles of drift net of 8½-inch mesh. We had also flown over a large forest fire north of Dillingham; how shocking it is from above! Wildfire is one of the curses of Alaska and has taken its course over 80 per cent of forested land since the white man went in. Wildfire empties a country of caribou quicker than the rifle, for the lichen goes; but fire favors willow growth, which is moose feed.

June 28. Grounded at King Salmon, which is the administrative nerve-center of the fishing. The Fish & Wildlife salmon-fisheries men are troubled. The fish are not going up the rivers to seed the spawning beds, and it is probable those 87 miles of net are catching pretty well the whole run. Dave Spencer has flown the rivers to see if the fish were coming, but no. The Fish & Wildlife men are getting jumpy. (We learned later that the Service stopped all fishing for two or three days—during which time the air went blue!—and a good run of fish got into the rivers, ensuring the future generation.) This most valuable natural resource is down to half what it was in fish; only the increased price has kept up the value. Conservation research is going full blast and is yielding excellent results, but as one wise guy insists, "We don't want research; we want fish." So it isn't dead easy for the Fish & Wildlife Service.

June 30. Kenai, an old Russian settlement: a man calls to ask if we will come and help search for a two-year-old child who has strayed from a homesteader's tent in the forest. Dave, Starker and I drive

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7 miles on a brand-new gravel road. At the very end of this is a pathetic bundle of household chattels, and back in the forest is a tent round which the man and his wife had been clearing when the baby girl had disappeared. The Marshal of Kenai gets out of another car, armed and wide-hatted. A beet-faced drunk falls out of a third car and calls for some method in the search. He rolls away unmethodically. Fifty men appear from nowhere, it seems, and the Marshal strings us into a line well over half a mile long, and we are to sweep round the locus of the tent. It is a bit of a job getting all these rugged individualists working together, but we go ahead through dense, wet undergrowth. After getting round perhaps 10° of our circle we come to a trail and halt to re-form our line. Then just as we are about to start again (I am nearer the peripheral end of the line) there is a shout at the extreme end, "We've got her," and 300 yards to my left I see a child in a man's arms. She is upright, so I know she is alive. She had got almost a mile into the forest in two hours. We wave handkerchiefs to two small airplanes and they wobble to show they understand. And now an ugly little man with 10 days of a beard walks up with the child. He is her father. But the child is of extraordinary beauty—large brown eyes, fine features, very small. Blissfully ignorant, abjectly clad, she smiles happily, talks in her own way and pokes an exquisite finger into that beard. The little runt himself is in ecstasy, seeing nothing, saying nothing, just striding ahead. This surely is his moment of beauty, for he found her. Bearded sourdoughs, cheechakos, construction men, engineers, bums and biologists come near, their faces all silly.

"Well, Goddammit miss if you haven't started soon enough going away from home! What the hell you'll be doin' at 17 damned if I know," and such pleasantries. The princess' court and its outriders proceed, till a bedraggled woman comes along, crying hysterically. Her relief is uncontrolled as she reaches the child. The retinue of 50-100 men suddenly becomes a group of individualists who happened to be walking that way. Those behind the family walk by as if it did not exist. It must be left alone in its moment of reunion. When we get back to the hub of operations, there is the little pile

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of things in the rain and that awful poke of a tent which must be these poor folks' home till they build their cabin. They are homesteaders; the Lord have mercy on them. The Marshal and two or three other braves with rifles stand by the bedding, point their guns into the air and fire six rounds to call in the stragglers. The hunt is done.

July 4. Manifestations of the blessings of this day in Kenai have been restricted to sporadic explosions of fireworks and slightly heavier boozing than usual. I spend the day reading in Dave's and the Marshal's library. There is a lot of thrilling stuff about Alaska from the days of early possession by the United States when many eager men went forth to explore. This period continued till the advent of the airplane and bush flying, since when little has been hidden, though it is far from being understood. That is the present phase of exploration here, trying to understand. It is impossible not to get excited about what there is to be done.

July 16. I take my picture of the sun shining on the pack ice at midnight, Point Barrow. Suppose every greenhorn does that. A 6-foot high cone of chopped-up freshly killed walruses is not pretty. The indignity seems greater than when a carcass is skinned and slung on a spandrel, for there is not the repose of individual death. As leads appear in the pack, the Eskimos are going forth in their umiaks to the walrus hunting. The whole of the walrus is used some way or other, but the quarry is so large and strong in life that the hunting tends to be wasteful. Many dead and wounded animals sink before they can be secured.

July 31. In the Romanzoff Mountains: this is one of the remotest spots on earth, at the northeast end of the Brooks Range, yet we have a large tent and have had cornflakes and fruit juice for breakfast. I cannot get any notion that we are exploring. The airplane is the key to Alaska and is a most romantic thing in what it achieves here, but it destroys much of the earlier romance of travel. We have flown here from Umiat on the Colville River and have come

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through vast areas of spiry mountains and undulating Arctic prairie, sometimes feeling we could touch the Dall sheep as we passed them on a mountain side, and being thrilled by the close-massed herds of caribou grazing the glacial valleys or moving toward the Arctic Ocean. These few weeks in the Arctic are the climax of our journey, and for me the Arctic third of Alaska is the best. Perhaps this is because it is the least touched by Western man and therefore the least spoiled. It is an eternal regret to me that there are so few places on earth where man improves on nature. Civilizing man as an ecological-climax breaker almost makes civilization a contradiction in terms. This is the ecologist's and the conservationist's biggest job, to remove the contradiction; how can we civilize without laying waste the planet? Not only has the answer to be found, but we have a big loan to pay back to the planet which has subsidized our existence since the dawn of civilization. We have not lived on the earth's free income, but on her accumulated capital, and she is beginning to complain.

Here in Lake Peters, a glacier-water lake at 2,900 feet, from which the ice went only 10 days ago, there are lake trout or char weighing up to 22 pounds. These monsters are swallowing mere 3-pounders whole. We are eating the monsters.

August 21. Wainwright: have flown here from Kotzebue and Cape Lisburne today. The Cape is a quite horrific limestone headland which juts into the Chukchi Sea opposite Siberia. There was a 40-mile-an-hour wind and the temperature at freezing. But the sun shines here at Wainwright and the wind is only a strong breeze. As we come to rest on the beach, a horde of brown, solemn faces are at the windows of the little airplane, gazing awestruck at an Englishman *in extremis*. They recover their smiles as rapidly as he does his peristaltic equilibrium.

Wainwright is a small Eskimo village set in a great expanse of low, flat tundra. The small modern school is in the charge of a young couple from New York State devoted to their job, the sort who will give of their utmost from idealism and who have taken the trouble to get an anthropological training. The impression I have brought

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away from their little house is of springtime growth and flowers. How was it done? Uncle Sam, be kind to them.

Counted 84 snowy owls on the trip of 100 miles to Barrow. They sit on the ridges of the frost polygons, visible for miles on the tundra. Many of them have not bred this year because the snow did not melt soon enough to lay bare the harvest of lemmings on which they feed.

September 12. Receiving the academic hospitality of the University of Alaska at Fairbanks. I am happy here in the eagerness of young folk. Some things are still raw, but the specialist graduate schools are second to none. I liken this place to a Renaissance university: so many of us are poor, God knows where many of us sleep, individuality is almost percussive, and the élan is something older institutions have lost, I think. Here it sweeps you forward in its enthusiasm.

The fine, dry, clear atmosphere of the interior, playing on the fading foliage of the woods, makes the fall a lyrical time. Could time stand still on these days! In another month I shall be back in the old rectory garden, the nightingale gone and only the robin singing.

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Advice to the Lost

HANNAH KAHN

First take sound, as frail as a feather
and turn it round till it forms a ball
then toss it far toward slanted weather
and see it stopped by a hard stone wall.

Then take light, as vivid as motion
and follow it farther than you can go
until you stand bewildered with tension
knowing there's nothing left to know.

And after the light and the sound have stalled you
walk down black to the rim of where
nothing is named, nothing has failed you,
walk down black to the lighted stair.

✪ The poetry of HANNAH KAHN has appeared in *The Survey, Saturday Review, The American Mercury* and *Twice-A-Year.*

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The Loud-Voiced Victory

DAVID CORT

IF IT HAS BEEN SAID BEFORE, we cannot be reminded too often that our Bill of Rights is essentially aristocratic. It was written by aristocrats and makes a new sort of aristocrat out of every man, woman and child living under its protection. Those first ten amendments, in a series of negations, describe a citizen of dignity and substance who specifically owns a home and carries a gun, who does not choose to be pushed or crowded, who thinks and reads and worships independently and who dares to outlaw secret charges and secret witnesses against himself. He's quite a man. The portrait is as sharp and explicit as a Gilbert Stuart painting.

It was a historical novelty of the most awesome kind that the aristocrats who claimed these rights extended them to the whole people—because they were magnanimous men or because they saw a vision of a better world on earth.

At any rate, we Americans now own these aristocratic rights and have at least the aristocratic responsibility of trying to keep them. We might even try to extend them to the enslaved and hopeless the world over. In any event, it must be recognized that aristocratic rights are always in danger; indeed, history is not much more than a recital of the decay and cancellation of aristocracies, from the wars of the Guelphs and Ghibellines to the American Civil War and two World Wars.

Hardly anyone now dares to speak openly against the Bill of Rights; but these rights are the secret target, and usually the first victim, of the open and hidden enemies of democracy. Clothed in them, the commonest man is terrifying to the tyrant; stripped of them, he is transformed by an evil sorcery into a pumpkin.

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The threat to aristocratic rights such as these is latent in every society. It is something so simple as the advantage always enjoyed by children over indulgent adults, the ill-bred over the polite, the uncontrolled over the self-disciplined, the shameless over the proud, the crooked over the honest, and the neurotic over the sane. It is as pathetic and unanswerable as the person who says, "Look out, or I'll lose my temper." It is the child lost in a tantrum, the drunk who wants to fight. It is all the meaningless words, used only in a torrent of passion, that convey the hatred without reason or mind or inflection. It is the loud voice, or the barking dog.

In southern countries the loud voice seems to be well understood and thoroughly discounted. It is chiefly in the north that people are awed by it. When they hear that sound in the night, coarsened and guttural and sorrowful, they generally rush to call the police. When they use it themselves, they are first shocked and then, to justify it, emboldened to a further rise in pitch. Every policeman has seen this justifying after-rage, which, because it is guilty, can be more dangerous than the first tantrum.

The cultural effect of the loud voice seems to vary in inverse ratio to the average mean temperature. Everyone yells in the warm countries, even the aristocrats; and everyone adjusts his nervous system to the yelling of the others. In Latin America, southern France, Italy, Islam, India and the American South, the tantrum is almost an art form, and appreciated as such. It is not, therefore, very alarming to other southerners.

In the north, however, two dangerous things happen. The nervous systems of the bystanders begin to jangle; and, even more ominous, the screamer is convinced by the sound of his own voice. Lenin and Hitler even scared themselves a little. Stalin, on the other hand, was never excited by screaming, being himself a southerner from a country habituated to civil war and treachery. In this broad sense, he can be compared more properly to Mussolini than to Hitler (who was, however, a South German). These southern screamers who come north have the problem of adding a little thought content without losing the thrill of the scream. Hitler and Stalin succeeded in doing this; I would say that Senator McCarthy shows good promise.

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But who cannot recognize the loud voices in the world today? They are so numerous and widespread and spring from such varied environments that it is as if some mysterious signal had awakened them all, like the frog chorus in the spring. The loud voice is the Russian delegate in the United Nations. It is the voice of Hitler, now gratefully heard only in recordings. It is heard in Czechoslovakia and Poland and in Iran, Iraq and Egypt. It throbs like a blocked artery in the throats of the Chinese Communists who are lynching missionaries and the more industrious villagers. It came over the ridges of Korea, working itself into the rage requisite for death. Disguised as an answer to the others, but really obeying the same signal that awoke them, it is even heard in America, in McCarthy's fruity tenor, punctuated by the sop to the grownups, "I have here in my hand photostatic copies." The world over, it is as if the children, the boors and the unbalanced had simultaneously discovered the sovereign power of making a scene.

Generally, it may be observed that where people are making a mess of their lives, they are screaming. Where they are doing reasonably well, as in Turkey, Greece, Pakistan and the Philippines, they are industriously going about their business. This rule can be successfully applied also to the screaming individual.

Screaming, of course, is not always neurotic. There are times that require a scene, such as that of the American Revolution. But the voice is not loud then. In that very different tone of the Declaration of Independence, it speaks with gravity of "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind"; for this is no Hitler or McCarthy—it is a Jefferson. The hatred for the tyrant was far outweighed by the Founding Fathers' love for their god, their race, their land and their "sacred Honor"; they wished only to be cleansed of the continued necessity for hatred. The very tone tells us that what was afoot was something much more portentous than a tantrum.

And in this test for a net preponderance of hatred or of love, men and causes can be judged again today. Communism, fascism and McCarthyism share the same recognizable howl and grinding contempt and fear. On the other hand, the much-abused "men of good will" feel and express more love than hatred. Whatever their mistakes may have been, they are not generally those of hatred.

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The patient indulgence that the adults give the loud voice may be defended in a psychiatrist or parent. But the surrender to this sort of blackmail in political life has in the past ushered in the death of aristocratic rights. The French and Russian Revolutions both began when the aristocrats began to sympathize with them. The reckless or unbalanced or sometimes timid ones joined the revolution, attracted by the prospect of going somewhere in a crowd.

This attraction is never really safety nor happiness, for it seems true that mankind never looks very hard for happiness. The objective seems to be to achieve that condition known to science as "polarized." A revolutionist whose positive end points toward a leader and whose negative end points at a villain (as toward the North and South Poles) finds life suddenly very simple. And of course the polarized man has no further need of the Bill of Rights.

One analogy between the first law of magnetism or polarization—that unlike poles attract and like poles repel—and those of revolution can be noted here: Communism was repelled by the liberal Socialist government of Kerensky and attracted the Tsarist officers who constituted three-quarters of the officers of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army. The bourgeois Fascist revolutions of Central Europe were repelled by the Jews, who had been the successful bourgeoisie. It is suggestive that the Chinese, who are the world's greatest merchants, are repelled by Western mercantilism.

These attractions and repulsions may not be evident to everyone. But the revolutionist can be sure of attracting the tolerance of one group he is sworn to destroy—the aristocrats, especially the more worldly, curious and unbalanced among them. The Duke of Orleans, Philippe Égalité—today he would be called Philippe Egghead—went over to the Revolution in 1789 with forty-six noblemen in the States-General.

But closer at hand, in the Romania of 1940, the aristocrats gave the indulgence of doting uncles to the ugly screaming of the Iron Guard. These half-baked hoodlums, a body of organized delinquents, were in fact the spawn of the Allied victory in World War I, which resulted in the breakup of some large estates, the increase of free education, and some industrialization. They were the

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dragon's teeth sown by the Fourteen Points. When Hitler's Western victory in 1940 put this Nazi-converted road company into the government, the aristocrats, who had the expected aristocratic opinion of the king and his mistress, went the way of Philippe Egghead in the French Revolution.

In her book on this episode, *Athene Palace*, the partly Americanized Countess Waldeck notes a distinguished Romanian princess who filled her salon with Iron Guard cousins and nephews. "The government must have a quick success," said the old lady with a fond look at her nephews, "or the revolution will become very, very bloody." Countess Waldeck quotes the Prussian officers and diplomats then in Bucharest as identifying themselves with this "revolutionary élan," "revolutionary vision" and the indubitable prosperity of revolution in general. At this period, Prussian generals had become so enraptured by the loud voice of the Nazi revolution that they even claimed that the Prussian officer corps had always been ascetic, anti-plutocratic, anti-libertarian, socialist and revolutionary. They were trying to make themselves identical with Hitler, but the attraction they felt was actually the magnetic one of unlike poles.

The author adds her own endorsement, "No smart revolutionary leader suppresses bloodshed until it rises to an evil and long-drawn-out crescendo [this was the point at which Philippe Egghead lost his head under the guillotine] but rather permits the revolution its night- or nights-of-the-long-knives in the beginning."

This is the delusion of the aristocratic aficionado of revolution: that a little murder will fill the revolution's belly, and that if heads must roll, better a few than many, better early than late; and to that end it is better to forget the aristocratic rules, but only for the moment. And then the aristocrats discover, as did Philippe, that it was not heads but rules that the revolution wanted.

Thus it might be said that Senator McCarthy was only after one head when he said in a campaign speech that he could make a good American out of Governor Stevenson with a club. The opponents of Governor Stevenson may have indulged this expression as a mere excess of "revolutionary élan."

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On the other side of the world, some democrats said that it was not worth continuing the war in Korea for the sake of a few prisoners who said they did not want to be returned to the Communists, in the face of the Communist screams that these unimportant individuals must be returned.

One head or a few heads? No. One rule and then all the rules.

It should be added that the Romanian aristocrats' tolerance of the loud voice came to a head in Bucharest in one of the more abominable massacres of the twentieth century—a Terror carried out by two hundred squads of six men each. But this is only the customary end of such indulgence.

However, even those who reject the loud voice of the revolutionist admit that it is usually victorious. The victories of Napoleon, Nazi Germany and the Communists are cited as examples. Aristocrats are often impressed by the energy and self-sacrifice of the unanimous and consanguineous group, all going some place together with the vision of their indomitable hatred held clearly before them.

A second and longer look at history, however, shows that the revolutionist is victorious, generally, on one condition—that he be victorious. It is too often forgotten that in 1941 the Communist high command scrapped the slogans of revolutionary bolshevism because they were totally ineffectual in defeat. When the chips were down, the loud voice no longer worked. Alone with his fear, a man who called on the mob slogans of communism found them useless trash in his soul. By the time of the battle of Moscow, the Red Army began to reorganize the morale program along different lines: love of Mother Russia, hatred of the Teuton enemy and fear of the commissioned officer. A year or so later, it began to work. A similar collapse was seen in Nazi morale a few years later.

Where the loud voice is not triumphant, a different process seems to operate. It is a property of democracy to fall apart when it is ahead, as it was in the 1920's and early 1930's. Democracies only begin to tighten and even grow formidable when they are losing, as in the Battle of Britain and after Pearl Harbor. It should be noted that this spirit is spreading and was seen in Korea in the feats of all

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the armed forces engaged, from the Turkish to the Philippine.

This may be taken as a dividend of the democracies' desire to extend the aristocratic Bill of Rights to everybody on earth; but their tendency to fall apart again in victory is to be read in every day's newspaper. The loud voice of the revolutionary has not ceased —perhaps it will never cease—to shock the adult, self-disciplined, proud, sane and aristocratic citizens toward the temptation of indulging it. Perhaps, they think, the new voice is a condition of continued existence; the young delinquents may be the government when they grow a little older; and of course the Philippe Eggheads are languidly convinced that the revolution is always the winning side.

It cannot be said that this applies to the United States at the present moment. Indeed, the loud voice of communism is almost equalized, but not quite, by the loud voice of its equivalent McCarthyism. The fact that the bedlam has been redoubled does very little to safeguard our aristocratic privileges, though some people may feel that the matter is being taken care of.

Today the loud voice in America is triumphant in only one quarter, and that, unfortunately, happens to be in an area most vital to our cultural life. The letters to the editors and the telegrams to legislators are a cultural force of which the majority of people are unaware, but they strongly condition the content of newspapers, magazines, television, radio, movies and government legislation. Some of these are intelligent, useful comments, the relics of an old-fashioned American tradition of public participation; a few of these even get printed. However, the great majority of letters are reflexes of partisan prejudice.

These hidden revolutions, about which the majority is never consulted, are directed at people such as editors and legislators, whose job it is to please, not to outrage. When the total of furious communications reaches a certain pitch, editorial policy is surrendered to the loud voices, not openly but imperceptibly. There is no published statement of the change, nor even placating answers to the correspondents, for large corporations rarely admit openly that they have been wrong.

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Perhaps the editors should submit these issues openly to the readers and invite a full-scale vote; but it is probable that the vote would be won by the revolutionists, for the intelligent, well-balanced readers do not usually take pen in hand.

In one long decade on a widely circulated slick magazine, the writer never had the pleasure of seeing a large amount of appreciative mail come in following the appearance of a really fine piece of journalism. He frequently noticed that one or ten thousand communications responded to a single phrase in screaming outrage, often exactly repeating one another. In the first case, it should be pointed out that the more admiration and respect are felt by normal, busy people, the less likely they are to confide these delicate emotions to the United States mails. In the second case, it would seem obvious that the true revolutionist is at work. Often, paid propagandists stage-manage the scream of protest; less often, the single phrase outrages thousands of people independently and spontaneously.

But so far as I know, no American magazine has ever made a systematic effort to call on the writers of such letters and assemble the data to form a judgment on their sanity before accepting their criticisms. For these letter writers have become the dominant factor in American cultural life: each minority has enforced its taboos, and the total of taboos equals the innocuous uniformity of American magazines, radio and movies today. The loud voice speaks, and the aristocratic rights vanish one by one.

What life before the taboos was like came back to me with a rush when I opened an old family song book somewhat optimistically titled *Songs That Never Grow Old*. The taboos would have torn from it all the national anthems and most of the drinking songs, and rewritten the words of songs such as "Simon the Cellarer," "Dream Faces," "Be Kind to Thy Father," "The Vacant Chair," "My Last Cigar," "Over the Banister" and of course the one which goes:

> My wife and I lived all alone,
> In a little log hut we called our own,
> She loved gin and I loved rum—
> I tell you what, we'd lots of fun.

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If I'd a cow that gave such milk,
I'd clothe her in the finest silk,
I'd feed her on the choicest hay,
And milk her forty times a day.

Remember that this was a song book for use in the home. The editors rightly assumed that, although the hero of this song was obviously an alcoholic, my singing it at the age of eight would not make me an alcoholic. The entrancing quality of all these songs is that they reflect life directly, without editing by a psychiatrist who thinks I am a hopeless idiot.

Why have I been deprived of all this? The answer is that the idiots have taken command, and are taking care of one another. They come in the millions; for in any civilized society about five per cent of the adults are psychotic, not obviously or dangerously, but inherently. In America today, this would add up to about five million voices.

The only investigation I know of that has explored this huge cultural force was conducted by Hans Toch and Jacob Goldstein in regard to mail received by the United Nations Department of Public Information. In this exhaustive study are quoted some examples which, while touching our sympathy medically, should excite our consternation politically, for they speak in our midst with the very voice of Vishinsky and Hitler:

Nations have ignored Me and I shall perplex nations through famine, wars, and earthquakes, till they become humble before Me. The wisdom of the wise, their academic degrees and their researches in science shall not save them from My Wrath. . . .
I have been telling the Nation's Leaders for the last eighteen years that world conditions will grow worse—till the final downfall of the world system comes. . . .
Due to your UN Council not having proper guidance, a most awesome and terrible Bible Prophesy is about to become a reality involving total annihilation of the West World. . . .

And so on. Most of these letters follow the line that Western civilization is doomed, that scientists and educated people generally are to blame, and that only an apocalyptic vision of one kind or an-

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other can save the world. Doubtless, Whittaker Chambers is saner than these correspondents, but his message suffers from its being exactly this and no more. In America, of course, the loud voice must lower itself in public and masquerade as "typical reader" or "average voter." Whenever it is clearly identified as psychotic, neurotic, or a special group or prejudice, it is powerless.

For though the strength of a democracy is that it trusts its destiny to the expressed will of the majority, its weakness grows out of the mechanical difficulties of determining what is the will of the majority. A vote for McCarthy may mean any one of half a dozen overlapping or even contradictory things, and democracy has trouble sorting out just which is the sense of the meeting. A vote is a vote. For the ensuing two or four years it is cashed in at any value the recipient chooses to place on it. If he is very wrong in his valuation of the vote, he may lose some votes at the next testing. This is a crude trial-and-error system, but it is the best one we have worked out, and its most awful miscarriages are happier than the successes of other systems. A vote is a vote to an editor too; and it is too much trouble even to check letters against subscription lists, and impossible to measure the "typicalness" of the writer.

A clue as to how these letters come to be written was given in a syndicated woman's column this spring in which alcoholic lady readers were telling how they occupied their time while on the wagon. One reader wrote: "I spend all my spare time writing to the powers that be, giving them a feminine viewpoint. [Note that she is immersed in the typicalness of her own viewpoint.] I helped in the anti-vivisection fight for stray dogs, and now I'm hoping to rescue some of the so-called killer dogs in Vermont which may be shot on sight if caught wounding a deer."

This seemingly artless prattle must strike terror into any thoughtful, patriotic American. Compared to the writer of this letter, Chambers and McCarthy are obvious eccentrics without credentials or influence. By sharing her "feminine viewpoint" and helping to paralyze scientific research, she won her spurs in setting civilization back a few years or decades, insofar as she was able. Now she has rallied to the support of the fairly useless horde of pet dogs, whose

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chief function is to distract the love of human beings away from other human beings.

It will be instructive to examine the equity and morality of her position in this matter. There are now in the United States something around four million white-tailed deer. The dogs are in the tens of millions and on the increase. To side with half-wild dogs is something like feeling pity for members of the Nazi S.S. brought to account for murdering Jews. I have no prejudice here; I like dogs and probably had distant kinsmen in the Schutzstaffel; but I must side with the victim against the assassin.

Suppose the "so-called killer dogs" were "wounding" me? Would she still be for the dogs? Suppose the white-tailed deer had gone berserk and were killing stray dogs; would she fly to the deer's defense? Certainly not. This correspondent has transposed an attachment for a given dog to all dogs under all conditions. What sense of logic or justice is to prevent her from transposing it to a person, to, for example, a Senator McCarthy, "just a boy, and such a thrilling voice"? She would think of Senator McCarthy leaping up at her lap, just as her lamented Doberman did in the long ago, and baying in that same moving and so marvelously senseless idiom. Strange, delicious feelings will pass over her in this fantasy, and she will agree that it is an outrage to criticize that sweet boy merely because he is "wounding" a few white-tailed deer, or the equivalent.

Actually the woman could not have examined the implications of her position so narrowly as I have done here. But subconsciously she shares the vice of Philippe Egghead and of protected people generally who can afford to sample the more luxurious edges of sensation. The one warmly remembered experience in this woman's life was evidently a dog—that is, a brute, a tamed animal that cannot help being a killer, a carnivore and, on occasion, a loud voice. Her emotions have been frivolously transposed to her politics, and her politics is effective because it is phrased in that genteel and Christian idiom, "Now I'm hoping to rescue some of the so-called killer dogs. . . ." They are always rescuing somebody, these ladies and McCarthys.

As for me, whenever they offer to rescue me, I cannot help re-

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membering the Walrus and the Carpenter in the famous poem by Lewis Carroll. As one of the oysters, I cannot help fearing that when I have trotted down the beach a way, I will be eaten.

But I do not really believe at all in the loud-voiced victory. There may be times when the aristocratic rights flirt a little with the seductive brute, or politely defer, or timidly shrink; but I believe that they will finally assert themselves, even at the last minute, as when the Walrus said:

"Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed."

"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue.
"After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do."

This was the oysters' last protest, but it was certainly rational and aristocratic. The vulgar American democrat must marvel at their silence as they were being swallowed by the Walrus and the Carpenter, suavely by the one and greedily by the other. A little uproar, one thinks, might at least have made the name of the oysters' beach immortal.

Americans are not the oysters in the poem. Here, the aristocratic rights are the property of ordinary people who are likely to spoil the rhyme by eating the Walrus and the Carpenter.

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The Cardinal Virtues

An Un-Sabbath-Day Sermon

MAX EASTMAN

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CONFUCIUS, the great teachers of virtue have based their codes upon some supernatural belief. Buddha, to be sure was not a believer in God, but his notion that good deeds are rewarded and bad punished throughout an endless cycle of reincarnations was remote from matters of fact. Even Confucius, the least mystical of moralists, hinted that there was some counterpart in an impersonal "heaven" for the rules of good conduct which he thought should prevail on earth. And Plato, although his moral teaching was offered as valid for this world, could not forbear to reinforce it with a myth of rewards and punishments in the next. As for us moderns, we quite commonly associate virtue with piety, with otherworldliness, with concern for the immortal soul. And yet I venture to think that throughout history, if a test could be devised, the skeptics would be found to excel in simple goodness the true believers.

Coming of a tribe of Christian ministers, I have always felt the temptation to compose a sermon—I mean, earnestly to advocate good conduct. And I wonder whether it might not be done without any surviving trace of the notion that things are something else than what they are. The text might be from Horace, or Ecclesiastes, or from Robert Herrick: "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may." The theme would be that the most difficult virtues are essential to the rich experience of mortal life. They require no supernatural sanctions; they derive their authority from common sense and the method and results of science.

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There are in the traditional view seven cardinal virtues: courage, prudence or mindfulness, temperance, and justice, according to the Greeks; and to these the Christians added faith, hope, and sympathy—or in their language, love. The list would be revised somewhat by a preacher who believed in matters of fact and scientific thinking, but it would not be abandoned.

Not a sparrow falls to the ground but proves that there is no Divine Providence, no Oneness of All Life. Every little bird is distinct and must take care of itself. Under these circumstances courage is absolutely necessary; it needs no heavenly argument. And physical courage is not enough, either. It does not make something of life, but only enables it to proceed. Moral courage, or boldness in asserting one's self, is just as important. Those who think they imitate Christ or the Buddha forget that Christ and the Buddha were not imitators. To imitate them is to abandon their high example.

But courage itself may be a danger. Such courage as theirs may lead to the madhouse, if it is not disciplined by thinking. Presence of mind, as Plato and our English speech perceived, is the larger thing we want when we ask a man to be brave. Presence of mind should stand first when the talk is of morals, for it is only as mindful beings that we are subject to moral instruction at all. It should also come last, for when all the ideal principles have been learned, it remains to decide in each concrete situation which one is to be applied. Once the irreducible variety of the world is acknowledged, and is embraced as an opportunity, we can no longer live by any code. In every crisis we must think out what is good. Even pure impulse and abandon may at times be good, but only the thinking man knows when. Even a lie, in emergencies of small range, may have value, but all the consequences must be measured and known. For honesty flows also from presence of mind, if the mind in question has any scope. The cheat, the liar, the evader is in the long run cut off from the true delights not only of social communion, but of communion with himself—for what self has he left? He is cut off from reality almost as fatally as if he had not been born.

To be mindful of others is a little less obviously necessary than to be mindful of ourselves. It involves more effort, and is more often

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supported by appeals to supernatural authority. Carried to the point of loving our enemies, it does badly need such authority. But when kept within sane bounds and given its true name of imaginative sympathy, this Christian virtue is nothing more than reasonable. Gregarious by nature, we consist largely of reverberations, and cannot reach our own stature without taking into ourselves the experience of others. Taking thought for others is a great joy; it gives life that genial flow and backflow that make a game as well as an ocean of it. It satisfies also to the extent possible our solemn wish to be one with the world. There is no oneness except such as we create, and we create it by living in imagination the lives of all creatures. The prophets derive a false sentiment of love from the concept of unity or the fatherhood of God, but it is multiplicity and the orphaned condition of man that make real sympathy and kindness both indispensable and rewarding. Such sympathy begets tolerance, a virtue that has been strangely lacking among the devotees of the religion of love. It also begets humbleness, for no man fully alive to the prides of others can be overly proud of himself. More carefully, I should say that it begets, or makes possible, an equilibrium between the extremes of pride and humility, of tolerance and the intolerance that life also at times requires of us.

Thus even in the virtues, even in taking thought for others, we must be temperate if our aim is mortal life and not salvation from it. True temperance is unknown to the saints, for sainthood itself is an intemperance. But its need is obvious to those who live with fact and reason. It flows logically from a wish not only to avoid the death dealt by indulgence, but to possess aboundingly the joys of life. For these joys are diverse, and each requires a separate energy and an unspoiled taste. A man who has reveled to excess in one pleasure lies below ground in the ditch of it, and cannot see, much less explore, the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them.

Justice, I think, flows almost inevitably from the union of Greek with Christian ideals. The Greek word so translated did not mean all that we mean by *justice*. In Homer it meant "the way." It was the way things were done. And when disputes arose, if they were not to be settled by fighting, this way had to be decided by some judicial procedure. Applied to the decision thus arrived at, the

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word came to mean not merely the customary, but the right way, or "rightness." It still meant "rightness"—or was traveling the road between "rightness" and "justice"—when Plato defined it as "everybody attending to his own business." He so defined its institutional aspect, meaning that every member of a class in his ideal state should perform the function proper to that class. And within the individual, he found the same word to mean "each part of him performing its proper function." This makes very little sense unless the word is translated "rightness." And what Aristotle has to say on the subject makes even less sense. It seems clear that the concept of justice as it stands in our minds did not exist for these philosophers. It did not come into being until Christianity had popularized in the West the ideal of sympathy, of doing to others as you would that they should do to you—or as Confucius more circumspectly put it, "not doing to others what you do not want done to yourself."

Justice, then, might be defined as the verdict of reason when sympathy is generalized. It does not demand that we love our neighbor as ourselves, an abnormal achievement and one that depends very largely, and quite properly, upon our neighbor. It demands that we judge our neighbor as ourselves, that we recognize both in private affairs and public institutions his equal right to build a life. That is high enough and hard enough, but it is a standard toward which we can aspire without becoming abnormal. And it has the same terrestrial authority as reason and sympathy, the Greek and Christian standards from which it was derived.

So far, then, my sermon follows the old sound track. No matter how mortal and matter-of-fact we become, up to this point the tradition of the cardinal virtues stands firm. A courageous, self-reliant, mindful, just, honest and temperate man, combining rational intelligence with kindly sympathy and the modesty and tolerance that go with it, is useful and beautiful on this earth, both to himself and others, and need not look to heaven either for justification or reward.

At this point, however, the tradition goes astray. To a mind dwelling resolutely on this earth, neither faith nor hope in the Christian sense is a virtue. If faith means believing in momentous ideas not supported by sound reason or convincing evidence, it is the first

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sin to be condemned by science. In faith's service every depraved and unsocial impulse of man has been given a function of honor. Faiths, being otherwise undetermined, make handy disguises for the lust of power and, so employed, have filled all history with cold, brutal and triumphant crime. If every man who ever kneeled to drink of an unverified belief had stood firm in the morale of suspended judgment, that, more than any miracle or revolution, would have led mankind toward paradise. We must raise into faith's place the discipline of doubt, of poised experimental thinking, if we are to live better, or live well, in this finite flux which is the only thing we know. To suspend judgment until facts are known requires courage; it invites thought; it makes room for sympathy; it gives time for justice; it is the supreme test of self-restraint. It has certainly a more natural place among virtues than faith!

And hope, too, is alien in this rigorous company. Hope is too fluid, and spreads too easily into self-deception and sentimental optimism, to be allowed a high place among virtues. Santayana's acceptance of unflinching disillusion is nobler in the mind. It was not hope in general, however, that Paul urged with such pathetic vehemence upon the early Christians. It was the one fixed hope of joy in heaven, a very immediate hope to him, but a hope useful only in abstaining from the joys of this earth. It was a hope of indemnification, and was never otherwise defined by that brilliant yet neurotic apostle. Paul shows none of the friendliness toward present pleasure that makes Jesus so stalwartly sweet and is so intrinsic to his gospel of imaginative sympathy. It is the fate of all great-hearted teachers to be distorted by some unbalanced disciple. But no other *epigone* in history, I suspect, has done mankind the damage Saint Paul did with his strident demand for the suppression of conviviality and natural passion.

"Those who belong to Jesus the Christ," he shouted, "have crucified the physical nature with its propensities and cravings." It was to support this continuous act of suicide that Paul made such a frantic fuss over hope as an abstract idea—a hope which "reaches up secure and strong into the sanctuary behind the heavenly curtain where Jesus has gone before us." It is well to remember that Jesus was already gone when this fixation upon hope as a great virtue

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came into being. Until we purify our hearts of Paul's sin against life, purging away every inclination to associate virtue with the renunciation of carnal delight, we are not healthy enough, not well-balanced enough to live wisely in this world.

To replace, then, that heavenly decoy, hope, I am compelled—since committed by the form of my sermon to the number seven—to seek out a virtue more akin to nature and more conducive to health. Voltaire, in attacking the philosophy of optimism, put work in the place of hope, having thoroughly murdered the latter with his slashing pen. "Work, then, without arguing," said Martin. "It is the only way to make life supportable." And Candide agreed with him in a famous epigram: "We must cultivate our garden." Goethe came to a similar conclusion, although with an influence from the Christian gospel. Faust found his moment of happiness in digging canals designed to benefit the community in which he lived.

Work is indeed, like play, one of the most important things in this life. It is the only cure I have ever found for melancholy. And philanthropic work, if one happens to be philanthropic, is, I suppose, a way out of the clutches of the devil. A great many sanitariums have flourished on these principles, and the reason is not far to seek. To labor toward some end throughout the energetic hours is the normal condition of all animal life. Walt Whitman was wrong when he said, in praising the animals: "Not one is . . . industrious over the whole Earth." Even the lark must collect her ninety or a hundred bugs a day. That is reason enough for regarding work, and the having of a work to do, as an element of good hygiene. A robust man, however, wants to aim at something more stirring than his animal origins. He wants something better to inscribe on his banners than a medicine.

Growth, I think, rather than work, would be the scientific candidate for hope's place among the virtues. To one seeking the best without spurning his foothold in nature, growth seems almost the inevitable crown of the virtues. To grow continually without growing old—that is affirmative, dramatic, difficult. It is something that only man can do. It is the sole way, without being unnatural, to surpass nature. The Greeks have but one word for these two ideas,

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nature and growth. And the Chinese, I am told, write the word *not* by drawing a straight line over a plant as though everything had to grow in order to exist. But plants and animals grow only to the point of maturity, and then stop short or begin to recede. Man, having a mind, does not have to stop growing. He can understand what nature does, and extend without abandoning her ways. He can cultivate the garden of himself, a wisdom as simple as childhood and as native to the earth.

It is a wisdom much needed today, when so many are surrendering their selfhood to a state or a party, not through poverty or insecurity, but because they no longer know what to do with a self. They have lost confidence in the old supernatural directives and do not know where to turn for guidance in living a life. Had they known from tradition that every man has a duty to grow—had we the custom, for instance, of saying "What are you learning?" instead of "How do you do?"—they would not so lightly surrender to any exterior discipline the happiness to be found in doing this duty.

That is what fact and reason have mainly to say, it seems to me, about morals. A man who knows himself and knows the world, whatever his attitude to the mystery of the universal, needs no God and no Sunday-school teacher to tell him to be good. If he preserves, together with mindfulness, courage, sympathy, temperance, justice and the art of inquiry, the gift nature gave him of growth, he will live well, and with good luck will live happily; and when his time comes to fall to the ground with the sparrow, he will know that he has made a jewel of the accident of his being.

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State Parties and National Politics

W. T. LAPRADE

THE ELECTION OF A NEW PRESIDENT and the transfer of responsibility of national political leadership from one party to the other, with an ensuing sense of frustration among many responsible for the change, suggest a consideration of how far these inevitable disappointments are inherent in our political structure. This consideration should center on a fact which we try to conceal in the years of Presidential campaigns, that rivalries of political leaders in the United States for public office are organized almost entirely with the state as the unit of operation.

Nevertheless, the national government has consistently from its beginning expanded its functions and proliferated machinery in an effort to fulfill its increasing responsibilities. Members of Congress have authorized the multiplication of federal agencies and have appropriated money for their support, while lamenting the expanding power of the executive. Representatives of the states have co-operated in enlarging the functions of the national government, while complaining that the rights of the states are infringed. But the need to preserve coherence in a society in which people depend increasingly upon each other and to mobilize the strength of the country in times of national emergency or international tension seems likely to continue to move our political leaders to be thus inconsistent in their speech and action.

Framers of the Constitution of the United States could look only backward; they drew their lessons from experience. They met to remedy weaknesses in the government under which they had co-operated to win independence. Congress clearly needed power to tax to obtain revenue for performing the tasks expected of a national legislature. There was also need of a responsible exe-

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cutive to serve as an agent for carrying out the behests of Congress. The provision of the Congress, the designation of its major functions, and the devising of a scheme of election were questions susceptible of compromise. Two senators "chosen by the Legislatures of the States" insured to each state an equal voice in one branch of the Congress. Members of the House of Representatives, the branch in which the people at large were to be represented according to numbers, were required to be citizens of the "States" from which chosen, and elected by those having "Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature."

Most of the members of the Convention which met in Philadelphia had previously sat in the Congresses of the Revolutionary period or in the succeeding years. They took it for granted that the election of members of both houses of the new Congress would be achieved in customary ways within the bounds of the several states. The national legislatures of the future, like those of the recent past, would be composed of men who had attracted attention by activities within the states. None would sit for a constituency including parts of more than one state.

The President and Vice-President would be officials of the nation. Members of the Convention worried much over the method of electing these officials and the duration of their term of office. Their experience with executives had been with the king or governors representing him. They recognized the need for an official with substantial powers. He was, for example, to be "Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy," to make treaties with the "Advice and Consent" of two-thirds of the senators—whatever that might mean—to appoint ambassadors and other ministers to foreign countries and a variety of domestic officials, to keep Congress advised and informed concerning the "State of the Union."

But members of the Convention did not think of him as a political leader with party management as a chief preoccupation. In fact, a majority of the members of the Convention thought of political parties as evils to be avoided. We recall that Washington, on retiring from the Presidency, warned the new Republic against "the baneful effects of the Spirit of Party." He had seen Jefferson resign from his Cabinet to lead a party seeking to capture the of-

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fice of President upon his own retirement. But if the framers of the Constitution had thought of the President as a political leader, their difficulties in devising a plan for his election would have been magnified. As it was, they hit upon a scheme that for impractical naïveté has been equaled by few makers of constitutions.

They rejected the notion that members of Congress should elect the President, which would have had the merit of affording a chance for deliberation by a group of leaders having in some degree the confidence of their fellow-citizens in the several states and an opportunity for mutual acquaintance and discussion among themselves. Instead, they stipulated that the President should be selected by "Electors" appointed in each state "in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may decide," but "no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States" could be an "Elector." Nor would these electors assemble in a group and deliberate upon the responsibility entrusted to them. They would "meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons," only one of whom could be a fellow-citizen in the same state, and then "make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the number of Votes for each," to be transmitted "sealed to the Seat of Government of the United States." There in due time the votes would be counted by the "President of the Senate" in the presence of the members of both houses of Congress. The person "having the greatest number of Votes," provided he had a majority, would be President. "In every case, after the choice of President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors" would be the "Vice-President."

There would be times when this odd procedure would not produce a President. The House of Representatives would then take over, each state having one vote. Thus, in providing for the choice of the only two officials whose election could occasion political organizations national in scope, the members of the Convention seem to have taken every imaginable precaution to restrict the contest within the confines of the several states. In every case, national functions were to be entrusted to officials chosen locally.

Fortunately, the first electors agreed that the presiding officer of the Convention should be the first President of the United States.

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His Vice-President succeeded him. But by that time many opposed the choice; the leading candidate of that opposition became Vice-President. In the next election the victorious party found that its two candidates had an equal number of votes, and the House of Representatives had to choose between Jefferson and Burr. That experience proved sufficiently the need for a change in the Constitution, which was made before the next election.

II

There had to be some method of nominating candidates for President and Vice-President if the voting of the electors was not to be habitually scattered and indecisive. The members of the Congress assembled in the capital, though ineligible to serve as electors, were better qualified to perform this function than any other groups likely to get together. For several decades, therefore, candidates for President and Vice-President were named by Congressional caucuses, sometimes after preliminary nominating resolutions by legislatures of the states. This method was more suitable for the group in office than for its opponents, likely to be less adequately represented in Congress. In 1832, the parties putting forward candidates assembled in nominating conventions. Since that time, the nominating convention has been the chief organization of such political machinery as the country has had on a national scale. The national committees of the parties serve as interim organizations between Presidential elections.

In these quadrennial conventions are assembled the active leaders of the major parties in the several states, the habitual seekers of office and positions of honor or prestige. These persons inevitably determine the character of the country's government. The marvel is that they work together as well as they do, considering that the only task they perform in common is to gather once every four years to select candidates for President and Vice-President and to formulate a statement of common aims or principles as little objectionable as may be to the constituent party groups in the states.

In fact, the party groups in the states are the vital units. They manage the campaigns for state and national elective offices. Dele-

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gates to the national conventions are for the most part governors, members of the Congress, officials of the several states, or aspirants for those places from states where the party is not in power. With only two officers elected on a national scale, and these only once in four years, difference of opinion on national questions is by no means the most vital factor in party division. The important contests for office and places of political leadership occur within the confines of the several states. There party victories are gained and the rewards of success allocated. Essential factors in the party machinery and procedures are thus prescribed by the laws and customs of the several states. An indication of the flimsiness of the national organization of the parties is the practice of permitting the candidate for President, after his nomination, to select the national chairman of his party.

When these state politicians assemble in national conventions to select candidates for President, they naturally tend to turn to one of their own kind who has demonstrated an ability for political success. In the twentieth century the two major parties more often than not have selected as Presidential candidates governors of one or another of the states. Of the successful candidates in the past half-century, the two Roosevelts, Wilson and Coolidge served an apprenticeship as governors. Harding and Truman had served in the Senate. Taft and Hoover had been members of the Cabinet; the former required all of the influence of a successful President to procure his nomination and election. Hoover, like Eisenhower, achieved by distinguished service to the country in a time of war the reputation that made him available. The list of unsuccessful candidates serves to emphasize the point. Hughes, Cox, Smith, Landon, Dewey and Stevenson had been governors. Bryan and Davis had been twice elected to the House of Representatives. Parker resigned from the bench to lead a forlorn hope. Taft and Hoover failed of re-election to succeed themselves. Willkie was an attractive amateur.

Once the President is inaugurated, his prestige is unique; his powers are extensive, his responsibility enormous. All of this is an asset, though it may become a liability to the party groups in the several states who have co-operated to elevate him to office.

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In a sense he is their man; they share the spotlight focused on him. They try to mobilize the fruits of success to strengthen themselves in their states. The President soon discovers that he cannot disregard their wishes. But in a country with diverse interests, agreement with some local leaders involves disagreement with others. The President discovers that the chief basis of unity in his party was the campaign for his election; the continuing basis of unity is the fact that another election is in prospect before many years. Meantime, parties in the several states and in their subdivisions go on. Local elections take place.

The President himself is likely to be conscious of his responsibility as the national leader and as the country's chief executive. He cannot evade the latter trust. He may recruit lieutenants to advise and help, but action is in his name. He appoints officials by the thousand, communicates with rulers of other nations, commands armies, navies and air forces, and meditates upon the complex affairs of the world. His incidental pronouncements are studied in search of hidden meanings.

In a time of emergency or obvious national peril, a majority of political leaders in both major parties rally behind him, and he seems to speak for a united people. Congress affords him the means and approves the measures that seem necessary. Mature members of the current generation have seen these things happen so many times that they have come to take them for granted and have forgotten that the situation is abnormal. Rulers of other countries have come to expect the President to be able to promise and then to deliver.

III

But this superficial exercise of power and seeming capacity for decisive action by the President is deceptive and tends to obscure the predicament in which the framers of the Constitution and the facts of political life in the several states place him. Few rulers exercise so much power; few wear a strait jacket which so effectively circumscribes action. When he first takes office, the President's appointments are confirmed, and a majority of his recommenda-

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tions receive favorable consideration. But before long, he discovers that the state political leaders who nominated and elected him, while willing to share credit for his success, want no part in the responsibility for his failures. Supporters avail themselves of his popularity to strengthen their own positions but resent any actions which tend to make their own positions less secure. He pays for his place in the spotlight by being expendable.

Both houses of the Congress are continuing bodies. True, their members have to be re-elected, senators at intervals of six years and members of the House of Representatives at intervals of two. But their constituencies in each case are wholly within a single state. They can make common cause with other aspirants for office in their states; together these leaders constitute the political parties in the states. Senators and representatives are chosen in the first place because they know how to enlist their local fellow-citizens to respond to their leadership. They keep their places only so long as they continue to be able to do so. The good will of their constituents has always to be a primary consideration, else other candidates will soon replace them. Like most elected officers, they easily convince themselves that it better serves the general good to adapt themselves to the changing views of their constituents than it would to yield their posts to less experienced leaders.

The first meeting of the Congress after a biennial election is the only other occasion besides the quadrennial election of the President when officials are elected whose duties are national in scope. Members of both houses elect their presiding officers—bar the ex officio president of the Senate—and provide for their own internal organization. On these occasions, as in Presidential elections, we appear to have national political parties. Members who call themselves Republicans are likely to mobilize in a body against those who have been elected as Democrats. Only thus could the spoils of victory be allocated. In these elections members who may seldom vote together on other occasions adhere to the party line. After that ceremony is over and the committee assignments are made, the realities of the case are soon again clear.

There is, in fact, not much doubt concerning the outcome of most of the organizational contests, except as newly elected mem-

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bers seek advantageous first rounds on the ladder of seniority and those who have been longer on the scene bargain among themselves for places left vacant by deaths or failures of re-election. A shift in the party having the majority means that the former ranking minority member of a committee takes the chair; the late chairman sits near him as a ranking member from the minority party. A newcomer on the committee defers to and has to learn from these, his elders. The senior members of the committee, except in election years, seldom have time to interrupt their responsibility for getting the complex business of the country done to indulge in the general recriminations of national party politics.

These senior committee members, perhaps the most important voices in deciding questions of national political and governmental policy, are not necessarily the ablest members of the two houses. They usually represent constituencies that habitually vote the same way. Senators and representatives from states and districts where the parties are evenly matched seldom occupy these seats of the mighty, nor do men with pronounced views on questions concerning which there is general difference of opinion. It is, rather, the conciliatory and adaptable personality, with ability enough to get himself re-elected but without too aggressive or positive a character, who remains in Congress long enough to find his way to the head of the ever forming line that leads through experience to a place of prestige and influence. Men who are successful in arriving at these posts of leadership are unlikely to come from the "two-party" states or constituencies. It is no accident that we have recently witnessed the replacement in these posts of a number of men from states in the South by others from certain localities in the North and West.

This method of allocating the responsibilities of leadership in the national legislature seems to put a premium on mediocrity and to favor constituencies where important questions of the day are not a major concern of citizens. But it is easier to find fault with it than to suggest a better one to take its place. To encourage men of exceptional ability and ambition to plunge themselves too soon after election to Congress into contests for positions of leadership would probably give rise to more difficulties than it would allay.

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IV

A local political leader who goes to Washington to represent his state or district is by no means free to meditate upon public questions and to vote according to the results of his meditation. His first obligations are to his local constituents, upon whose continuing favor he depends if he is to achieve influence or distinction in office. This may not mean compromising his own views. He won election because he and a majority of his constituents agreed about many current questions. He wishes so to conduct himself as not to vitiate these areas of agreement. If he ceases to be a local politician, he imperils his career.

He soon discovers that local interests are involved in plans national in scope projected by his party associates. In such cases, he may desert his party associates in favor of the local interests. He discovers that these local interests are sometimes best served by concerting action with members of the rival national party who have similar local interests to serve. He is not thereby disloyal to his own party. He will regularly support its candidates for President, for Speaker, and the like. He sometimes faces questions promoted by organized business, professional or other such groups concerning which his constituents have developed no pronounced views. Even in these cases he may discover that he is not left wholly free to consider what seems to him to be the merits of the question. The interest desiring to be served may be able to project its influence into his constituency more effectively than it has hitherto done. Or he may find that colleagues whose co-operation is needed in order to promote a vital local interest insist that he in turn go along in a case vital to them.

But congressmen who retain their seats and begin to achieve places of influence discover that many pressures which may complicate their careers come not from their local constituents nor from lobbyists for organized interests national in scope, but from government agencies. Heads of these agencies are appointed by the President and are responsible to him. In the aggregate, they constitute an immense bureaucracy established to perform tasks of manifold diversity and to expend every year billions of dollars. This execu-

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tive apparatus has grown constantly since the founding of the Republic, and there is little indication that the scale of its activities will be reduced.

It is easy to join in condemnation of "big government" concentrated in Washington unless one becomes a senior member of a major committee of Congress. He may discover that many expenditures from the national treasury are dispensed locally, that a majority of federal employees are not denizens of Washington, and that the President does not have the task of directing these numerous agencies because of his appetite for power. Most of these agencies were created by Congress. They come annually with hats in hand seeking appropriations to enable them to perform their assigned tasks.

The President is responsible through an appropriate agency for preparing the annual budget and for transmitting it to Congress. He and the heads of the agencies under him have the duty of formulating plans, estimating their costs and, later, of doing what is decided upon. They render the public service and spend the public money. They cannot escape their share of blame when things go awry. Responsible administrators, even more than the President himself, are thus expendable; they come and go. But many more officials having knowledge of what needs to be done and how to do it abide. Upon them the country depends to get most of its work done. They naturally try to equip themselves with means for doing it and learn by experience how to do so.

When the requests contained in the budget are considered by appropriate committees of the Congress, the abiding members of these committees and the abiding administrative officials have at some stage to reach an understanding. Operations of the government have to be provided for. Congress has to provide the means and the authority; effective administrative officials have to operate within this framework. Thus administrative officials try to explain as far as possible the nature of their tasks to influential members of appropriate Congressional committees. Committee members give much attention to their own responsibility; they have to explain these matters to their colleagues, most of whom have to devote similar attention to other aspects of public business. In conducting

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these negotiations, administrative officials are dealing with recurring phases of their own professional obligations. Experienced members of Congressional committees have to think habitually of colleagues whose support must be persuaded and of their own immediate careers. To introduce national party politics into these negotiations, except in rare cases where the national parties have made definite public pronouncements, would be to complicate further a process that is difficult at best.

Both parties to the agreement finally reached prefer to have it written down. Administrative officials wish to have statutory prescriptions to insure as far as possible the financial support of their plans and to safeguard themselves from blame. Participating members of Congress wish to stipulate that the authorization granted and the expenditure of the funds provided shall be limited in the manner Congress intends. The inevitable result is a statutory strait jacket vesting a minimum of discretion in executive and administrative officials, and frequently affording license for waste and offering little chance or incentive for efficiency or economy.

Whenever the force of general circumstances or the pressure of the public will moves Congress to act in a new field, it tends to add another to the list of federal agencies. The President has new officials to appoint, new organizations for which he is responsible, new expenditures for which to budget. If the new agency performs a function corresponding to a public demand, it becomes a part of the general bureaucracy. Those responsible for its administration try in seeking annual authorization and appropriations to justify and to enhance their functions as a basis for further or increased support. Responsible members of Congress, who provided for the agency in the first place, suffer it to continue, as they are convinced that it promotes the general good or has public approval.

For many aspects of the President's leadership the public ought to hold him responsible, but he is only partly responsible for the growing functions of the federal government. His responsibility is to make recommendations and to see that the enacted will of the Congress is carried out. To make sure that money is spent according to its prescriptions, Congress has established and maintains the General Accounting Office.

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Insofar as the functioning of the national government is not responsive to the public will and in the general interest, therefore, Congress deserves the major part of the blame. But it is easier to vent public displeasure on the President than on the Congress, which is composed of members from many localities, each member responsible only to his constituents. A senator or representative tries so to conduct himself as to retain the favor of those who elected him. The political shoulders of the President are much broader than his. Where vital local interests are at stake, he does not hesitate to oppose the recommendations of national leaders of his party, whether in Congress or the Presidency.

Only occasionally does the party line determine the vote when the houses of Congress are considering legislation. On a vast majority of the questions there is no clear difference between the parties, although members of the responsible committees frequently differ among themselves without regard to national party alignment. It would be surprising if this were not the case.

The experiment has been tried occasionally of having the members of a party in Congress caucus in an effort to bind themselves to support a common agreement. This expedient is more likely to work when a party returns to power with a considerable majority after a long period as a minority. It was used by the Democrats in the early years of the first Wilson administration. When this procedure is feasible, there is a measure of national party responsibility. At present the majority party does not have a sufficient majority to allow the defections due to local interests and still leave the appearance of effective action.

V

It is easier to state this lack of responsibility to corresponding political organizations in our national government than to suggest a remedy. Those familiar with the more effective results obtained in Great Britain and in other countries where the principal executive officers are members of and responsible to the legislature have advocated that practice in the United States. It is unlikely to be adopted. The doctrine of the "separation of the powers" has been

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a part of our tradition from the beginning. The British originated the doctrine experimentally while floundering in search of a workable scheme of government, but soon rejected it while seeming to accept it. Our government has developed its current practices on the assumption that it is the business of Congress to make plans and to provide the means, and of the President to see that these means are used to carry out the plans agreed upon.

Thus the national public cannot bring effective pressure to bear upon the members of Congress, who are elected locally and participate only incidentally in national politics, though national government is their major responsibility. Since the principal function of the national parties is to elect a President, and incidentally the leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the fundamental unit of political activity is the state. There most men ambitious for places of leadership launch their careers; there most political careers continue and are completed.

State parties that co-operate every four years to try to elect a President have to find bases for common action general enough to include the organizations in all the states, and a candidate with reputation and strength enough at least not to lessen the chance of local victory. Under these circumstances, when time brings discontent with the party in office, the President is likely to be the scapegoat. Voters may vent their pent-up emotions on him to a degree almost pathological, and at the same time return to influential and decisive posts most of the members of the Congress who acquiesced in and provided for the doing of the things criticized. Those responsible for informing the public might at least take pains to make clear the location of the place of decision. But experience seems to show that when national party leaders try to intervene in the general interest in a local constituency, it is likely to arouse resentment among local voters.

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..... Under Whatever Sky .....

IRWIN EDMAN

On Renouncing One's Past

I was about ten years old, I think, when I made my first attempt to renounce my past. I decided to put away childish things, including building blocks, forever. I did not have my *vita nuova* particularly planned; I had no program for a life more abundant. But it came over me all of a heap, as the London charwoman said, that playing blocks, building silly castles out of small pieces of wood, or towers, or even railway stations, was something I must put definitely behind me. At that early period of my life and of the century, I had no suspicion, nor had most of my elders learned from Freud, that one's past lives on, in one's subconscious if nowhere else and, as life teaches us later, in the sometimes inconvenient memories of other people. I simply arose from the floor and announced to my playmates that I had parted company with the bygone.

Literature is, of course, filled with examples of persons, real or feigned, who have sought to put their past behind them: Julien Sorel on his way to Paris, David Copperfield on his way to Dover, St. Paul on the way to Damascus. These persons were at least moving toward something new while they were leaving their past—the provincial town, the blacking factory or, in Paul's case, all of Judaism—behind them. Until one learns better, one tries to cut one's self from one's early history at a given date, such as one's thirteenth birthday or any New Year's Day. One is interested not only in turning over a new leaf, but in being sure that all the previous pages are destroyed.

One ought to learn, but one never quite does, that one cannot abolish one's previous history. Sometimes now at very great expense, one can gradually and painfully exorcise it on the couch of a psychoanalyst. But there it is still, in some trivial gesture, some turn of feeling, some nuance of thought, or in the memory of friends one had neglected or forgotten, or had tried to. All this is lucky, too. How bare and bleak and colorless we would be if our past did not persist, despite our efforts at erasure. And the first thing we know, the very yesterday we renounced turns up as a golden age recollected. Sentimental memory plays havoc with all our fine renunciations.

Deterioration Complex

A few years ago there was a mutiny in Dartmoor Prison in England. The Chairman of the Royal Commission was not a man to study conditions at second hand. He went down to the prison itself and interviewed, among others, one of the oldest inmates in the institution, one who had not been involved in the uprising. "What brought about this mutiny?" he asked. "Quite frankly, what? The food, the discipline, what?"

"Well, sir," replied the old "lag" quite politely, "I have been a member of this prison man and boy for forty years. I think, sir, I may properly claim to call this place my home. Now some says one thing, sir, and some says another, but," he said, lowering his voice, "it's my belief, sir, we're not getting the stamp of man in 'ere we used to."

I had heard Englishmen say quite seriously that the older type of British criminal was really a very decent chap. Even in prisons there is a tradition of the old school tie, of not letting your side down. The oldest convict sees a deterioration in his fellow convicts, and not only in England. Nor are prisoners alone in this respect. Senators complain that the Senate has come down in the world, as I have heard barbers complain that the younger barbers no longer know their trade. If the complaints of each generation were as justified as they are by

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each generation believed to be, the world would now be at a very low ebb. By the same token, if men were once really like gods, it must have been a very long time ago. It clearly required a longish era to come down to our present state. Similarly, unless we are all blown to pieces by our own hitherto unparalleled stupidity, we shall have a long way to go before we get to the nadir of human worth. It is small comfort when we reflect on the villainies of our time that posterity will look at itself and some of the older members of it will, looking back on the human race, reflect, "We're not getting the stamp of man we used to." Will they, will they *just possibly*, be meaning us?

Index of Qualified Rapture

Some years ago there was published a volume entitled *Dictionary of Invective and Abuse*. I remember it because I made the mistake of giving it to a friend for a birthday gift, and he thought I was offering it to him as a subconscious summary of my opinion of him. The lexicon was really not complete or adequate. It could not be, for though it contained some classic examples of urbanely stated abuse, it could not incorporate all the expletives, the ambiguities, the barbarities that scorn privately commands or exploits or is driven to.

I was reminded of the natural vivacity of the language of contempt by a more recent publication, *Lexicon of Musical Invective*, in which the editor selects the ingenious things critics of the past have found to say about contemporary works which posterity has found noble and beautiful. The editor drew the moral that the unfamiliar is always obnoxious even to the informed. I derived a different lesson: the pleasures of the dialect of rage, the virtuoso joys of condescension or impatience or scorn.

Anyone who has any experience reviewing books knows what is meant by the phrase, "Oh, that mine enemy would write a book." Oh, that the stupid, the pretentious, the faker would write a book, especially one that by the very blandness of its arrogance would insinuate itself into a certain eminence. How the vocabulary quickens when the opportunity presents itself of taking a strong line or a satiric one. How varied are the ways which one immediately thinks of to damn the pompous, to castigate the silly, to ridicule the empty, to mock the solemnly trivial! How imagination responds to the opportunities of being conscientiously malicious!

The vocabulary of praise is more difficult. This fact becomes distressingly familiar on the many occasions, for instance, when it becomes necessary to write a letter of recommendation, say, of a former student. One trots out all the best things one knows about the worthy young man who is applying for a fellowship, a first teaching job. It goes without saying, but one has to say it, that the youth is a person of unquestioned integrity and of unusual charm. He is, but the words sound blandly unconvincing as one writes them. Even integrity is not uncommon among the young, and charm, *unusual* charm, is quite widespread. So-and-so would make an excellent teacher; he has both clarity and enthusiasm and is a first-rate scholar. One means these things, they are true, but how often one has had to say them about how many people; and one hesitates to use, or to try even to find, more unconventional ways of indicating virtue to administrators, not as a rule hospitable to eccentrics. What a fine letter one could write if one only had a candidate one wanted not to recommend! One expresses one's commendations with an enthusiasm which sounds factitious or with a sobriety which sounds dull. It is a pity one achieves one's highest flights in one's lowest opinions.

The Nostalgia Industry

The title of Frank Sullivan's recent collection of essays about sums up the memoir situation: *The Night the Old Nostalgia Burned Down*. Virtually every literate family in the country has some member of it putting down on paper blotted with tears and shaken by laughter those recollections of the good young days on the farm in Minnesota, on the old estate in Denmark, in

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the mansion on Belgrave Square, or in Moscow. Not content with dredging up the past out of the inner consciousness, or perhaps unable to do so, many have for a generation now been collecting antiques. Antiquity grows nearer and nearer. It seems only yesterday that "Victorian" was the name for the last word in stuffiness and bad taste. But Victorian lamps and furniture, I am told, now fetch a pretty price. The latest form of the passion for antiques is the collection of ancient cars, "ancient" meaning as recent as 1920.

To burn always with an old nostalgic flame is the new restrospective Epicureanism. It is not surprising that at the pace at which we are moving, the relatively recent and the remotely antique have become one. It is certainly so in the realm of ideas. To the astonished first reader, Plato and Aristotle seem amazingly fresh and "modern" (a word every generation naively uses as a compliment). But the ideas of fifteen, ten, five years ago already have a period flavor.

Where are the ideologies not of yesteryear, but of yesterday? I have a friend who has no collection of quaint old automobiles. But he displays, proudly and almost constantly, quaintly old-fashioned notions and delightfully dated vocabularies. Any night at his house, over a cocktail before dinner or over a brandy after it, you can hear him bring forth the quaint period-piece jargon of the behaviorism of the twenties, the technocracy of the thirties. He trots out even the early-model Freudian lingo as comparable in antique charm with a Maxwell steamer car. But he has begun pushing things a little hard. It is stretching a point to call existentialism "antique." But perhaps it won't be long now.

New Wine in New Bottles

I saw an advertisement the other day of a widely read—and deservedly so—novel that had sold in the hundreds of thousands. The publishers had apparently decided that just about everybody had read it who could possibly be expected to do so. It was no use any longer saying, "Read the book that almost everybody has read." For all practical purposes everyone had read it. The publishers decided on a new track: "It is time now to read it again."

The wholesale book merchants undoubtedly were well aware of what had happened to the previously purchased volume. It had been loaned to someone who was going to return it promptly. But it was a long book, and it took time to read, and somehow it was never brought back. Clearly it was time not only to read it, but to buy it a second time.

One cannot help speculating a little on what on earth the publisher had in mind by saying it was time to read it again. One arrives at a period in life when there are lots of good reasons for rereading a book one has read as a child, as an adolescent, in one's twenties. Only last summer I picked up by accident a bedside copy of *Cranford* in the guest room of an English home I was visiting. Where, I asked myself, was my sense of humor when I read it, by prescription, in high school? Or where was my teacher's? Why did I go all these years recalling it as a little stuffy and a little genteel, or simply a period piece? It was indeed time to read it again. And *Gulliver's Travels*, and Thomas Browne, and all the books that one does not exhaust or even quite understand the fiftieth time, or imaginatively realize completely even then. Time to go back to the "great" books and, if the truth be told, find out, perhaps for the first time, that the adjective is just.

But a book only two years old! Time to read it again? Astonishing doctrine, subversive to the whole of the publishing industry, and a conspiracy against working authors. One can imagine that soon the book pages will be filled with advertisements of last year's masterpieces which must be read again. No wonder we shan't get around to reading the new books. We shall have a matchless excuse. We're busy going back to the volumes that last year we were assured were different, were wonderful. Who knows? On a second try they might turn out to be so. And, meanwhile, it is just too bad if genius just hot off the press languishes unread.

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..... The Revolving Bookstand .....

Behaviorism with a Vengeance

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR IN THE HUMAN FEMALE. By Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin, Paul Gebhard. *Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company. 842 pp. $8.00.*

Reviewed by ABRAM KARDINER

Dr. Kinsey and his associates have by now, with their volume on *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, established themselves among the great sexologists of history. This book is a true product of our time, and it carries the popular authority of the opinion poll and the questionnaire method of tracking down social phenomena. It has, therefore, the timely authority of the statistical method that is so prominent in our American ethos, and it has introduced into the study of sexology the technique of the assembly line. If Havelock Ellis was the naive describer and historian, Freud the researcher into psychodynamics, Kinsey *et al.* represent the invasion of the field by the behaviorist armed with a computing machine.

Like any assembly-line procedure, it is efficient and slick. It is a veritable encyclopedia of information; and its data are arranged in such a way that with very little trouble any woman can thumb through this book and come out with a chart of her own personal standing in the great norm that is herewith established. It is also a source for satisfying the most prurient in every possible detail of what other people are doing in their sexual lives.

Dr. Kinsey's method is one of many for studying sexual behavior, and it yields some information that cannot possibly be ascertained in any other way. For this part of his labors all students of sex will be indebted to him for a long time. Notwithstanding serious flaws in sampling, the undue weighting of the sample toward urban groups, educated groups and certain religious groups, this book gives a broad sweep of the distribution of certain forms of sexual activity. We doubt whether more accurate sampling would materially affect his results, though it might satisfy those who are now willing to penalize him by disqualifying all his findings. There is some information here that is invaluable to the student of contemporary social trends: the demonstration of the shift in the sexual behavior of the female toward greater sexual freedom in the past fifty years is decisive and startling; the consistent effect of deep religious conviction on sexual behavior is likewise dramatic and challenging. These and a score of other valuable correlations make this book indispensable to any student of contemporary culture. This is what makes it one of the great human source books of our time.

But Dr. Kinsey is not fully aware that his method of working is not only his tool, but also his tether. He is unwilling to remain within the confines that his method logically demands in the canons of scientific procedure. This failure to recognize the limitations of his procedure leads him to draw conclusions to which he is not entitled and to ignore others of high import because they cannot be fitted into the procedure. What else can be expected? He first divides sexual behavior into a fixed number of identifiable "parts," only one of which, the orgasm, can be qualified by "yes" or "no." This alone can be quantified and then correlated against certain fixed social condi-

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Domenico Scarlatti

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tions like age, marital status, profession, education, religion, et cetera. Motivations cannot be measured in the same way. Therefore, they are omitted. Not being in any position to evaluate the relative importance between the items he can and those he cannot include, he therefore does not hesitate to draw his conclusions from those data that his procedure has rendered relevant. Naturally he treats the findings of all other procedures in a very cavalier manner.

This is behaviorism with a vengeance! Moreover, his behaviorism is stretched to include mammalian sex behavior and the averages of sexual norms in other cultures. Trying to establish a norm for sexual behavior including mammals and primitive cultures is like setting out to take the mean temperature of all patients in a five-hundred-bed hospital on the principle that since they are all in a hospital, they must be sick. We can then get a mean temperature of 101.8. This figure is meaningless because it is taken out of the only meaningful context in which temperature would be significant, namely, what disease the patient has. So Dr. Kinsey ignores the fact that sex custom and sex behavior are always embedded in a social context without which they cannot be understood and in a motivational context without which they are meaningless. Therefore, Dr. Kinsey's assumptions lead him astray. He insists, for example, that human homosexuality is a biological variant because it occurs in lower forms of life. This is a misleading conclusion, because homosexuality means persistent choice to the exclusion of the opposite sex. Such a phenomenon is unknown in lower forms of life, notwithstanding transient phenomena that resemble it.

Dr. Kinsey, therefore, not only misleads us: he takes sexual behavior out of its motivational context, whereas man is distinguished by the fact that sexual behavior is integrative, cumulative, subject to discrimination and choice, and ultimately tied to the total emotional development. Moreover, although his data show a distinct change in sexual behavior in the past fifty years, Dr. Kinsey cannot tell us why this took place, but he insists he is describing the "human female." He is merely describing the American female, 1939-1950.

The limitations of his methods lead Dr. Kinsey into great difficulties in establishing the meaning of the orgasm which is central in his quantifying procedure. This is really the pivot of the entire work. The extent of female frigidity in Kinsey's sample proves to be, according to his method, very small—and for a very good reason. Whereas the male orgasm is unmistakable, the female orgasm is not. None but those who have had gradations of orgastic experience know what is meant when the question is put. In clinical practice many females answer this question "yes," when the fact is, as is ultimately discovered, any tickle or thrill is interpreted as orgasm. Moreover, by making the clitoral orgasm the basis for his standard and refusing to acknowledge the difference between this and the vaginal orgasm, many a woman in his sample is recorded orgastic on a technicality. Thus a woman who is capable of clitoral orgasm through masturbation but incapable of coital orgasm, clitoral or vaginal, unless manipulated by herself or her mate emerges as orgastic in the record. Besides, he ignores the fact that orgastic potency is the resultant of the total emotional relationship with the mate and is not merely a spinal reflex. This failure to standardize his central unit of study is therefore a high source of error.

What faith can we place in Dr. Kinsey's work? There is still a good deal. Since the same standards are used throughout, relative differences can be relied upon, and this still leaves a great store of valuable information.

However, when Dr. Kinsey steps out of his role as reporter and becomes both an interpreter and an advisor, we can no longer trust him. His advice is often misleading and in some issues perhaps harmful. Masturbation is not a training school for coital potency, nor is premarital intercourse a way of improving one's chances for successful marriage. It is advice of this kind, explicit or implied, that shows up the importance of the motivational factors that Dr. Kinsey could not include in his armamentarium. He inevitably winds up putting the statis-

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tical cart before the motivational horse, and it is upon this kind of upside-down reasoning, in which the role of cause and effect is reversed, that Kinsey comes by the advice he so freely offers. Furthermore, the entire work is conceived without regard for those ends that sex morality purports to bring about and without regard for the social evolution of which this sex morality is the end product. Sex custom is one of the main supports of the entire structure and functioning of society.

What is of value in this book could have been stated in one-tenth the space, and the high merit of what is of value is spoiled by the overconfidence the authors show in a method that is limited and pressed into the service of attempting problems it cannot solve. One cannot use arithmetic to solve problems in tensor physics. At a time when crucial issues in sex morality are being wrought in the toils of painful and costly social experimentation, misinformation is dangerous and can only have one outcome. It will add still more confusion to the sexual unrest of our time. And for this, not Dr. Kinsey, but the public will pay the price.

Frankly of the Earth

THE GOLDEN AGE OF HOMESPUN. By Jared van Wagenen, Jr. Illustrated. *Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press. 280 pp. $3.50.*

Reviewed by DONALD N. BIGELOW

Taking his title from Horace Bushnell, who was extolling the merits of life in the first half of the nineteenth century, and concerning himself almost exclusively with upper New York State during that period, Mr. van Wagenen has written an interesting and sentimental book about "the farm life, the household handicrafts, and the rural occupations of that bygone era." Farm-born,

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DONALD BIGELOW, assistant professor of history at Columbia University, is the author of *William Conant Church and the Army and Navy Journal* and co-editor of the *Makers of the American Tradition Series.*

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and proud of it, the author, a professional farmer, has spent his eighty-two years within sight of fields and the smell of animals. The book, he admits, "is frankly of the earth, earthy." It is an attempt to put into "some permanent form some record of the lore and the methods by which our forebears lived upon the land."

The years of which Mr. van Wagenen writes were, he says, "good years," and he implies that they were better years than those in which we live today. "I am glad to boast," he announces, "that we have never wholly adopted the newer ways of life." In spite of the material progress made during the last century, he doubts whether we have enjoyed "greater happiness" than did his great-grandfather, whose own life spanned "the golden age of homespun" when a man relied upon "his trusty ax" and "his trusty ox team." The homespun age nourished—and the author is quite explicit about this point—"many splendid qualities of heart and brain."

How the forests were cleared, what tools were used and how they were made, the crops that were raised, and the various occupations in which the early settlers were engaged are all explained with tenderness and a sympathetic attention that reveals the author's personal predilections. The book is informative and will certainly prove fascinating to those who know nothing about life on a farm before the days of electricity and artificial insemination. The account of how the forest was cleared and the amount of timber that the early settlers burned in the process (often without salvaging one piece of wood) is an example of Mr. van Wagenen's ability both to tell a story well and to capture the essence of the pioneer's life.

With great patience and not a little repetition, the author has assembled many facts which help to describe in somewhat uncritical but intimate terms the life of the early farmer. No one who has lived on a farm, even in recent times, can fail to find in this book a delineation of the fundamental facts of farm life which, in spite of the ubiquitous works of technology and the Department of Agriculture, still prevail.

The sources used by the author include his own experiences, those of his friends and his family, and the New York State census figures for 1845 and 1855. The census reports are his bible. Indeed, he refers to them so frequently and interprets them so freely that the statistics have a monotonous effect which often interrupts the author's story without proving anything. Paradoxically, the census reports do not cover the golden age of homespun, for after 1845 (or thereabouts) the golden age was in eclipse. The author's attempt "to reconcile somewhat shadowy traditions with more recent factual findings" is usually unsuccessful. His use of figures in regard to Cattaraugus County (the last county in the state to be settled) illustrates this point. He quotes from the records of 1855 at some length, assuming that conditions in Cattaraugus at that time "indicate something of the setting of the stage on which was enacted the long, patient . . . pageant of the homespun age." It is doubtful whether the situation in Cattaraugus by 1855 provides an adequate guide to the situation in, say, Columbia County as early as 1825. The fact that 267 carpenters lived in the former county (we are told twice that it is 267 and twice that it is 257) seems to bear little, if any, relation to the number of carpenters who lived in Columbia County thirty years previously. Without Columbia County's own development, the situation in Cattaraugus would undoubtedly have been quite different. Yet, in effect, we are asked to assume that the picture for the last settled county—and as late as 1855, at that—indicates the relative number of carpenters to farmers in the homespun period.

The question of the pioneer's self-sufficiency is examined by Mr. van Wagenen and here must be re-examined. While the author makes much of the farmer's supposed self-sufficiency, he also shows that behind the early settler there was "the second-line army made up of that wholly indispensable company who carried on the pioneer handicrafts." He offers no evidence, however, that this did or did not take place during the golden age, which may or may not have been as self-sufficient as Catta-

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raugus County was in 1855. In this reviewer's estimation, Cattaraugus was not much more self-sufficient than is the modern "gentleman" farmer; for, as Mr. van Wagenen points out, in 1855 there were some 2,343 persons whose vocation was other than farming, and the greater part of them are supposed to have serviced the farmer in one way or another. That the American farmer was ever self-sufficient is highly questionable.

The author's insistent reliance upon the statistical data obtained from the two census reports and also his occasional reference to other printed sources, such as John Fiske's *The Beginnings of New England* or Dr. U. P. Hedrick's *A History of Agriculture in the State of New York*, fail to make this a well-documented book. But this is a book of reminiscences, rich and varied, partly autobiographical, and largely anecdotal. It is when telling the tales he heard from a farm helper, John P. Schaeffer; or his old crony, John Brown; or Lot Hall, friend and farmer for many long years, that the author makes his greatest contribution to explaining "the lore and the methods by which our forebears lived upon the land." On the other hand, Mr. van Wagenen has drawn a clear picture of his own early days on the farm (after the Civil War) rather than of the golden age of homespun.

Furred and Winged Actors

ICEBOUND SUMMER. By Sally Carrighar. Illustrated by Henry B. Kane. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 262 pp. $3.95.*

Reviewed by PAUL A. ZAHL

Nature lore is open to a number of approaches. The ecologist sees it in terms of population pressures, climate, food supply; the geneticist considers life from an evolutionary bias; the physiologist finds the driving factors to be hormones, internal bio-

✪ PAUL A. ZAHL is a research biologist. His articles on nature subjects have appeared in a variety of publications, including the *National Geographic Magazine.* He is the author of *Flamingo Hunt*, published in 1952.

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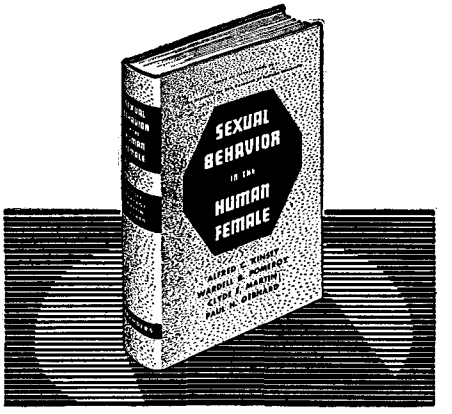

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chemistry; the taxonomist views fauna and flora in terms of distribution patterns, speciation; the comparative psychologist interprets animal behavior as the resultant of interacting tropisms, reflexes and instincts. But—it is said in learned circles—whosoever presumes to represent the lower animals in humanized terms is either tampering with license or writing for the nursery.

Sally Carrighar's *Icebound Summer* is blithely full of such presumptions. She speaks of the lemming as "impatient" and "bored," of the tern's "sense of outrage"; the fox "could take pleasure in watching a polar bear's expert swimming," and the whale's "great sympathetic heart pulsed with his yearning." Miss Carrighar reveals herself not primarily as an ecologist, geneticist, physiologist, taxonomist or comparative psychologist; she is a poet seeing natural history in sentient rather than literal dimensions.

In the eleven vignette-like chapters that comprise *Icebound Summer*, the author's perceiving eye settles successively on the lemming, the seal, the fox, loon, tern, whale, walrus, faun, plover and other wildlife representatives which during the brief Arctic summer appear in burgeoning abundance throughout Alaska's permafrost regions. Each of these animals is followed through one phase or another of its life cycle; and, while many of the book's hardcore facts fall into the category of twice-told tales, they are invested with such charm and vigor that the reader does not mind hearing again, for example, of the lemming's nigh incredible death march to the sea, of the fish-tossing flight of a pair of courting terns, of the perennially prey-seeking Eskimo. Miss Carrighar stalks her various protagonists across cracking ice floes, into blue-cold depths, through forest, tundra and sky. One feels the sting of Yukon winds and sees the Arctic's breaking whiteness; one senses the ferment of life; one learns something of the endless struggle to live, of the unceasing drive to reproduce.

Miss Carrighar's animal people, morphologically as dissimilar as a tern and a polar bear, exhibit a subjective sameness—but this, in the reviewer's opinion, has justification. Interpreters of nature who would have bears fierce because they appear so, plovers gentle by the same token, are forgetting that in the eyes of its natural enemy or intended victim, every animal species is the personification of terror. To have endowed her animals with contrasting personalities would place Miss Carrighar in Walt Disney's camp.

That *Icebound Summer* is written in breadth and color, and not additionally in depth, is also true to the author's intention. To go into the functional whys and wherefores of this Arctic menagerie might have resulted in a treatise rather than a readable book. Many a trained biologist can write with topical understanding in the field of natural history. Rare, however, is the writer—and Sally Carrighar is certainly one such—who can breathe life into a life cycle, who can turn a walrus into something other than a pinniped mammal.

Some of the Arctic settings against which Miss Carrighar directs her furred and winged actors truly gleam; here her gift of language serves faithfully. Elsewhere, overrich writing causes the picture to lose resolution; here the reader must depend on vaguely feeling rather than clearly realizing the action and the background. Occasionally, line-speaking human characters pass across the scene; these are not overly sharp, but do nevertheless serve the needed function of breaking the monotony of the otherwise oppressively continuous preoccupation with nature.

For the literate reader who loves and appreciates his nature uncorrupted by analytics, *Icebound Summer* is a most appealing contribution to the literature of the North. For the reader who must have, along with his nature lore, the sauce of penetrating insight, the book may leave a bit to be desired. Miss Carrighar is as yet no Muir or Thoreau, but she treads their paths with originality and freshness.

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A Vital Human Occupation

POETRY AND THE AGE. By Randall Jarrell. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 271 pp. $4.00.*

Reviewed by LOUIS SIMPSON

Randall Jarrell's book about poetry and the criticism of poetry pulls the bung-cork out of the barrel. The reader is exhilarated, led on to agree with Mr. Jarrell joyfully, even to cap his opinions—and at last to grow reckless. In speaking of Whitman's rhetoric, Mr. Jarrell says, "If the reader thinks that all this is like Thomas Wolfe he *is* Thomas Wolfe; nothing else could explain it." Bravo! How right he is, and how right we are, right along with him. On the other hand, in speaking of certain poems by Frost, Mr. Jarrell says, "Anybody who doesn't know them doesn't know some of the summits of our poetry, and is so much to be pitied that it would be foolish to blame him too." Now it is we who are to be pitied or blamed, for we have read the poems and they leave us cold. Why then, if, as about Frost, we often disagree with Mr. Jarrell, do we still feel that his book is one of the few about poetry which merit a tinker's profanity? We feel it because the author exercises a sympathetic response to the poet's intention and, more important, he is convinced that poetry is one of the vital human occupations, inseparable from emotion, inseparable from life.

Poetry and the Age is enormously readable. The chapters which make up this collection occasioned a great deal of comment as they appeared in various quarterlies, and it was perhaps their readability which was most remarked upon. For here, in an age of New Critics, they said, was a critic who could write. It has been ironic that for many years the style of poetry has been discussed, and measures for poetic style have been laid down, by men who cannot write well in their own medium, prose. Mr. Jarrell writes well because he remembers what outstanding poets and critics have always known: poetry is serious, but never dead serious. To write about things of the first importance, you must know the things of the second and third. To rise, you must know how to fall; you cannot write *Macbeth* or *The Eve of St. Agnes* if you do not have an acute awareness of the comic possibilities. From an interest in other things, so strong that words seem inadequate to express it, comes grace with words.

Not only by his readability, his wit, is Mr. Jarrell distinguished. He is distinguished also by his method of criticism—or rather, his refusal to pretend that he has one. He quotes Eliot, who remarked that criticism is a matter of being highly intelligent. He goes at the poem without having, apparently, a vested interest to protect. If he has persuaded you that William Carlos Williams' *Paterson, Book I* is a fine poem, he does not—just to be consistent—shrink from pointing out that *Paterson, Book IV* is a poor one. His enthusiasms are his own. His chapters on Robert Frost seem doomed to please neither those who have always liked Frost nor those who haven't. He conveys his enthusiasms by persuading, by quoting. He sometimes creates a mosaic of quotations. Indeed, I thought once or twice that Mr. Jarrell had written new poems for his favorite authors by putting their best lines together.

It is not possible with Mr. Jarrell—as it is with Mr. R. P. Blackmur, for example—to predict just what his attitude will be toward a particular poet, a particular poem. After reading Mr. Blackmur for a while, one gets—apart from the feeling of being hit over the head with texts—the vague outlines of a theology: Pound, whatever he does, will be saved; Hart Crane, though he write as angels, must be damned. But it is not so simple with Mr. Jarrell. Since he has no method but intelligence, it is unlikely that he will have a school of followers.

To try to reproduce this critic's enjoyment in other words than his own would be a dull task. The chapter on Whitman strikes me as being a masterpiece of sympathetic criticism; the pages on "The Obscurity of the Poet" and "The Age of Criticism" set forth problems which are

✪ LOUIS SIMPSON is an assistant editor of the Bobbs-Merrill Company He has published poetry in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR and elsewhere, and is now working on a verse play.

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Number Three

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crucial and, without undue optimism, affirm the necessity of poetry. In his "Verse Chronicle," writing of the anthologists, Mr. Jarrell passes beyond criticism—at least, criticism as we have suffered it—and writes comedy. (". . . the book has the merit of containing a considerably larger selection of Oscar Williams' poems than I have ever seen in any other anthology. There are nine of his poems—and five of Hardy's. It takes a lot of courage to like your own poetry almost twice as well as Hardy's.")

Poetry and the Age may not start a revolution in criticism. If, as the author points out, no one will wake up in our time and find himself famous for having written a poem, neither will anyone for having written a book about poetry. But the attitude toward the art of poetry implicit in the following statement is so far removed from recent attitudes, and so far preferable for the poet and the ordinary intelligent reader, that we can only hope it becomes current: "A good poet is someone who manages, in a lifetime of standing out in thunderstorms, to be struck by lightning five or six times. . . ." Perhaps, after all, the age of criticism will be followed by a time of inspiration:

> And we, who have always thought
> of happiness climbing, would feel
> the emotion that almost startles
> when happiness falls.

Brief Comments

THE NEW ENGLAND MIND: From Colony to Province. By Perry Miller. *Harvard. $6.50.*

In part a continuation and in part a companion to Mr. Miller's earlier work also entitled *The New England Mind*, this erudite and well-written book is as much a guide to its predecessor as it is to the intellectual activity of the Puritans in colonial New England. That it will satisfy and serve many people is inevitable. The historian, philosopher, theologian, even the sociologist—all will find facts and interpretations of interest and value. His study, Mr. Miller says, "is chiefly valuable for its *representative* quality: it is a case history of the accommodation to the American landscape of an imported and highly articulated system of ideas." Certainly the Puritans are a special case, and whether or not an analysis of them provides a "working model for American history" is debatable. Vast in scope and precise in detail, the book will remain an unparalleled guide to the mind of a people whose motives and activities can receive no more careful study or clearer presentation than this definitive book. Future historians will have to accept Mr. Miller's work as the plinth upon which much of American intellectual history must rest.

THORSTEIN VEBLEN: A Critical Interpretation. By David Riesman. *Scribner's. $3.00.*

This is by far the best short book on Veblen and his work that has yet appeared. Mr. Riesman, by pay roll designation a sociologist, is able to deal professionally with all the disciplines over which Veblen's mind and pen were disposed to range. The result is a series of penetrating essays on Veblen's economics (including in particular his central thesis on the conflict between the businessmen as moneymakers and the engineers and technicians as producers): the immortal disquisition on the leisure class; Veblen's views on education and contemporary affairs; and his excursions into anthropology and biology. The phrase "series of essays" should perhaps be emphasized, for the book lacks something in continuity. It is also a bit too heavily preoccupied with the psychological motivations of Veblen. However, it is a penetrating and incisive exercise, and it avoids the common error of supposing that because Veblen was the most original of American social scientists, he was also the most influential and the most nearly infallible.

THE WORLDLY PHILOSOPHERS: The Lives, Times and Ideas of the Great Economic Thinkers. By Robert L. Heilbroner. *Simon & Schuster. $5.00.*

Economists spend altogether too much time enlightening one another, and often

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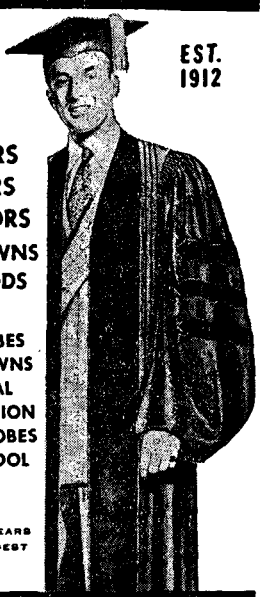

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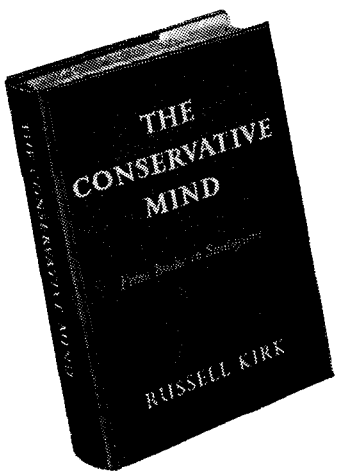

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on matters that are of little importance, although there may be fun in the activity and even a pious hope that a drop will be squeezed out of the highly abstract orange which will throw light on economic anatomy and pathology. This book will do more for economics than the lifetime work of many distinguished professors of economics. For Heilbroner, who earned a *summa* in economics at Harvard and has had several years of graduate work, is endowed with a genius for picking out the essential ideas of the great economists, and presenting them not only so effectively that anyone can understand them, but so interestingly that once the book is picked up, it is almost impossible to put it down.

AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. Edited by Merle Curti. With essays by Merle Curti, Louis Wirth, W. Stull Holt, René Wallak, Walter R. Agard, Arthur E. Murphy. *Harvard.* $4.50.

This volume is one of a series on various phases of life and culture in the United States, planned by the Committee on American Civilization of the Library of Congress under the direction of Ralph Henry Gabriel. The fields of knowledge covered are the social sciences, history, literature, classics and philosophy. An introductory study by the editor undertakes to relate the changing tendencies of scholarly activity to those of our civilization as a whole. The effort throughout is to present the achievements of American scholars in clear perspective and with balanced judgment. Written as they are by men who are themselves involved in the movements they describe, the essays show a varying degree of commitment to special points of view.

THE SERMONS OF JOHN DONNE. Edited with introductions and critical apparatus by Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter. Volume VI. *California.* $7.50.

This volume, the next to be published after Volume I, contains eighteen sermons from Donne's middle period, some of them among his best. One sermon, that preached before Charles I after the death of James, has hitherto been available only in the rare quarto edition. Number 18 contains a mem-

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orable religious and ethical accounting of the terrible experience of the plague. Number 2 is a reflection, the more interesting for being indirect, of Donne's own great sickness of 1624. The literary characterization of these masterpieces in the introduction, and the editorial treatment generally, continue to be of the highest quality.

MAKERS OF THE AMERICAN TRADITION SERIES: ANDREW JACKSON, by Harold C. Syrett; ROGER WILLIAMS, by Perry Miller; BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, by I. Bernard Cohen. *Bobbs-Merrill. $3.00 each.*

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The *Franklin* in this series is able, but, despite the claims made for it as presenting novel views, does not substantially alter the image of Franklin. The *Jackson* is somewhat more remarkable, in that most of us had not suspected intellectual dignity to establish him as a practical philosopher-statesman. The *Roger Williams* is a little jewel of a book. Professor Perry Miller excerpts and modernizes Williams' fantastic prose, and succeeds in brief compass in reinterpreting Williams. The reinterpretation is a double one; the reader not only gets the first clear view of Williams' intellectual significance in his own time, but he also has a much better notion of Williams' significance for the present day.

The typographical aspect of the series is gracious, the editorial work first-class, and the scholarly writing lucid and cogent.

THE PAPERS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON. Volume VII. Edited by Julian P. Boyd. Illustrated. *Princeton. $10.00.*

The latest volume of the most ambitious scholarly undertaking now in progress in the United States covers less than a year: March 2, 1784, to February 25, 1785. Jefferson was concluding his legislative career and beginning his diplomatic. Since his mission to Europe was not the most successful phase of his life, it is the peripheral materials here that stand out in interest, although not necessarily in importance. But whether Jefferson is discussing balloons with Philip Turpin, devising a decimal system of coinage, or pioneering in the use of the questionnaire as he prepares for his Paris post, the editing continues to be complete and inspired.

THE BONANZA TRAIL: Ghost Towns and Mining Camps of the West. By Muriel Sibell Wolle. Illustrated. *Indiana. $8.50.*

Over seventy thousand miles of back-road explorations and interviews have resulted in a study of the development and present condition of mining towns in twelve states, symbols of the boom days when prospectors sought gold in the Western streams and mountains. Maps, a glossary of mining terms and over a hundred contemporary sketches of towns and town sites make this handsome book a practical guide for travelers, a store of valuable information for Americana enthusiasts, and a source of pleasure for all who would better understand America's Western heritage.

THE BIG PICTURE. By David Cort. *Bobbs-Merrill. $3.50.*

This is a delightfully unhackneyed, things-in-general book by a former *Time-Life* writer who has begun to brood about the universe. Everything from the Kinsey report to the latest cosmology gets in, and the author seems to hope that some of the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle are beginning to fit together. Much curious information and a good deal of fresh common sense, all well spiced with heresies, result in a briskly readable and highly entertaining book.

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FROM LENIN TO MALENKOV: The History of World Communism. By Hugh Seton-Watson. *Praeger. $6.00.*

The impact of the Communist movement on the outside world and of the outside world on it is the subject of this useful but somewhat mistitled book, less than a quarter of which deals with the Soviet Union or leaders. The author, son of one of Britain's most distinguished scholars in the Slavonic field, calls his point of view "post-Marxist"; he is strongly anti-Communist and leans heavily on ex-Communist sources. His book is useful chiefly as a compilation of facts in a field where they are hard to come by; they range from Java to Chile but include, curiously, no mention of communism in the United States.

THE WORLD BETWEEN THE WARS: From the 1918 Armistice to the Munich Agreement. By Quincy Howe. Illustrated. *Simon & Schuster. $7.50.*

This is the second volume of Howe's *A World History of Our Times.* The author describes nothing less than everything that happened. His emphasis is on events rather than causes, and he is more reliable and at home in politics than in science, literature and ideas. His orientation is liberal without being rigidly schematic. Profusely illustrated, covering events and personalities in every part of the world, the book is impressively detailed and remarkably readable. Yet at the end, after the whole tragic story is told, we see *how* the twentieth century got into its present mess, but not *why.*

THE SPIRIT OF ST. LOUIS. By Charles A. Lindbergh. Illustrated. *Scribner's. $5.00.*

Here is the first true and complete story of one of the most thrilling adventures of our time: Charles Lindbergh's own account of his nonstop airplane passage from New York to Paris. It is also the story of the early days of aviation and the men who made it into a science and an industry.

Scenes from his childhood and barnstorming youth help portray the man full-length; but the climax, told in remarkably effective language, is the flight itself, from the dream through the months of preparation to the lonely, tense, triumphant hours over the dark and pathless sea.

THE SELECTED LETTERS OF LORD BYRON. Edited with an introduction by Jacques Barzun. *Farrar, Straus & Young. $3.75.*

Lord Byron, who has come down to us in a Romantic cloud, stands revealed by these letters as a disciplined and practical man. An orphan, too poor to merge easily with the station in life to which he was entitled, and a cripple in the bargain, Byron soon learned how to make the most of circumstances. What infuriated his contemporaries more than his behavior was his contempt of the cant in which such behavior was usually cloaked. Byron's letters are good reading, especially when he is talking of horse trading or publishers' terms. Those affairs of the heart which have been thought to be his main interest seem rather to have been interruptions in a career.

LÉLIA: The Life of George Sand. By André Maurois. Translated from the French by Gerard Hopkins. Illustrated. *Harper. $5.00.*

To the long list of men who have loved and admired George Sand can now be added the name of André Maurois, for this excellent biography is clearly a work of deep and intense devotion. This is not to say that Maurois offers excuses for or detailed explanations of the woman who, according to Flaubert, "will remain one of the splendours of France." Rather, he allows her to speak for herself through carefully chosen passages from her *Histoire de ma Vie,* her novels, letters and journals, as well as those of her contemporaries.

It is one of the ironies of literature that over seventy-five years after her death, this biography of Sand—a study in the imperfections of love—should be written with a tenderness and patience which would have meant much to her during her lifetime.

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KATHERINE MANSFIELD: A Biography. By Antony Alpers. Illustrated. *Knopf. $5.00.*

Mr. Alpers, himself a native New Zealander and writer, describes from firsthand observation the social and physical environment in which Katherine Mansfield grew up. Although she rebelled against her family and the rigid mores of her class and left her homeland for England and the Continent in her late teens, many of her stories derive from her youthful impressions of New Zealand and her own family experiences. Although Mr. Alpers has fully explored these connections, the paradoxical personality of Katherine Mansfield is best revealed in the quotations from her own writings. While Mr. Alpers' analyses are not always convincing, nor his hypotheses as to "what might have been" pertinent, he has written a fresh, sympathetic and very readable biography.

TOLSTOY: A Life of My Father. By Alexandra Tolstoy. Translated from the Russian by Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. Illustrated. *Harper. $5.00.*

Leo Tolstoy's beloved daughter and disciple Alexandra adds a contribution of unique value to the literature on the great novelist, social prophet and religious philosopher. In addition to her personal recollections of her father and of life at Yasnaya Polyana, the author draws on her thorough familiarity with the diaries and papers of Tolstoy (she was his secretary during the last decade of his life) to give a well-rounded and objective study of the man. Although her treatment of the stormy relationship of her parents is not impartial, it shows an attempt at fairness and balance.

PURPLE PASSAGE: The Life of Mrs. Frank Leslie. By Madeleine B. Stern. Illustrated. *Oklahoma. $3.75.*

This first study of Miriam Florence Follin Peacock Squier Leslie Wilde, Baroness de Bazus—one of the most glittering personalities of nineteenth-century America—is based on research so copious and detailed that it is likely to be the last. If the writing itself is a bit too effusive and gay at times, the reader is satisfied that this is the manner in which the subject would have wanted her story told. In fact, there is little question but that Mrs. Leslie would have tried to hire Miss Stern for one of her numerous publications.

PERIOD PIECE. By Gwen Raverat. Illustrated. *Norton. $3.75.*

In a brief preface to these recollections of her earliest years, the granddaughter of Charles Darwin warns the reader that "This is a circular book . . . all going on at the same time. . . ." The fourteen chapters of well-ordered confusion which follow are punctuated by the author's highly personalized drawings. Mrs. Raverat is a pleasant companion for reminiscing. Although life in the Darwin household was secure and stimulating, she does not brood over the good old days. Indeed, she concludes, "Oh dear, Oh dear, how horrid it was being young, and how nice it is being old and not having to mind what people think."

ART IN THE ICE AGE: Spanish Levant Art, Arctic Art. By Johannes Maringer and Hans-Georg Bandi in execution of a plan by Hugo Obermaier. Translated by Robert Allen. *Praeger. $12.50.*

An exciting book in which the prehistoric art of the Ice Age in Europe, the Spanish Levant and the Arctic has been handsomely reproduced, a great deal of it for the first time, with an admirably informative text. It is a striking thing, as these cave pictures show, that aside from the beauty of the carvings and the yellow, red, black and brown paintings, the postures and limbs of fast-traveling mammoths, bison, horses, stags and boars are of a correctness and realism never attained by the Egyptians, the Greeks, or in the Renaissance. In fact, after Ice Age man, nobody comprehended the footwork of a running animal until our own recent examples of instantaneous photography.

MAKING A POEM: An Inquiry into the Creative Process. By Melville Cane. *Harcourt, Brace. $2.95.*

In this age of wordy, functional "how to"

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lectures, articles and books, it is extremely pleasant to pick up a small, amiable volume such as this one. For as Mr. Cane points out in his introduction, "I have no wish to impose my views on others or to dogmatize on how poetry should be written. . . . I am no authority except for myself." This candid recounting of his experiences and thoughts while writing makes this study stimulating and helpful both for those who write poetry and those who read it.

BROTHER TO DRAGONS. By Robert Penn Warren. *Random House. $3.50.*

This "Tale in Verse and Voices" tells how, on a night in December, 1811, in West Kentucky, the brothers Lewis dismembered a Negro slave on a chopping block. Lilburn Lewis is the evil genius; Isham, his awed accomplice. Lilburn, grieved by his mother's death, broods over the stealing of spoons by the slaves, which he regards as a violation of her grave. The murder follows. When it is detected, the brothers agree to shoot each other. Lilburn is killed, as he planned; Isham survives, to fight and die at the Battle of New Orleans. There are stretches of evocative poetry in the story, but the reader who is unwilling to assimilate the author's concern with Evil, or to feel that the Southern landscape in itself invests crime with grandeur, may not be moved by the characters or the action.

TEN BURNT OFFERINGS. By Louis MacNeice. *Oxford. $2.50.*

Mr. MacNeice was inspired to write these poems during his stay in Greece. They are a poet's challenge to an unpoetic age, reaffirming those aesthetic and spiritual values which neither science nor mechanization can supplant. The poems range in subject from the death of a cat to the paradox of a saint's faith, from contemplating the significance of time to rhapsodizing on love. Mr. MacNeice has experimented with new and fresh forms in his ten "burnt offerings." They sparkle with pungent literary allusions and are exciting in their rhythmic versatility and power.

THE ADVENTURES OF AUGIE MARCH. By Saul Bellow. *Viking. $4.50.*

This big novel might be subtitled "Going at Things Free-Style." The orphaned Augie is nourished on the swarm of Chicago tenement life. He becomes the confidant of Einhorn, a crippled commercial genius; is nearly adopted by a wealthy lady; accompanies a neurotic divorcée to Mexico, where they train an eagle to hunt giant lizards; marries the beautiful Stella; and almost ends up at the bottom of the sea. But Augie always manages to escape from doubtful blessings. Security is baneful to his intelligence, and he retains a happy innocence which—together with the liberties the author takes with probability—makes this a comedy in the grand manner. There are faults of construction, and the rhetoric sometimes palls, but from now on, any discussion of American novelists will have to reckon with Mr. Bellow.

TOO LATE THE PHALAROPE. By Alan Paton. *Scribner's. $3.50.*

Enacted to the tones of Paton's heavy Biblical prose, the structure and plot of this powerful chronicle of destruction are deceptively simple. Far more than an explanation of an individual conscience and its conflict, this is the story of the dilemma of many people. Only the reader who accepts this novel as being written about and within the context of Malan's South Africa will find the full measure of depth in each character and situation. This may prove to be the weakness of the book. However, at this time it is enough that Paton's soft voice is still the most commanding to rise above the furious noise of South Africa or any other area in which crucial battles of racism are being waged.

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The Reader Replies . . . . . .

THE READER REPLIES *carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *Phi Beta Kappa Hall, Williamsburg, Va., and should not exceed 300 words in length except on request. Because of limitations of space, we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.*—EDITOR.

A Case of Identity

In his article in the Summer issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, entitled "The Life and Death of Words," Mr. Dwight L. Bolinger speaks of the Neo-Humboldtians as being so named after "the great nineteenth-century Baron von Humboldt, pioneer in geology, terrestrial magnetism, botany and anthropology, in addition to the study of language."

As there were two brothers, Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt, both barons and both scientists, and as, except for his editing, in 1886 in collaboration with Dr. Buschmann, his brother's unfinished study of the Kawi language of Java, Alexander's name is not otherwise associated with linguistic studies, I strongly suspect a misapprehension here.

Of the two, Wilhelm is certainly the one who acquired a reputation as a philologist by pointing out in the deservedly famous introduction to his study of the Kawi language that what counts in language is the "innere Form," of which the material structure of language is only the outward manifestation. This introduction rapidly became the foundation for a new, if at first slightly lambent, conception of language.

I hasten to observe that there has always obtained, even on the periphery of scientific circles, a certain confusion as to the identity of Wilhem von Humboldt, who, on account of his lesser output, was frequently slighted in favor of his brother.

PAUL-LOUIS FAYE
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado

★ ★ ★

No alibis. Reader Faye is absolutely right. I confused the edited with his editor brother; and Karl Wilhelm, no less celebrated than Alexander, but more in public life and less in science, was the spiritual leader of the Humboldtians in language.

DWIGHT L. BOLINGER
University of Southern California
Los Angeles, California

In the Best Traditions

Too rarely do we find a magazine which calls our political and intellectual inadequacies to our attention, supplies informing and entertaining articles, and leaves the reader with his intellectual self-respect. Yet THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR more than fulfills these needs. The months between the arrival of new issues are considerably brightened by the presence of material which may be read many times with increasing enjoyment.

I would like to cite especially three articles and one regular feature which, in my opinion, have been in the best traditions of the magazine. The articles were Joseph Wood Krutch's "The Loss of Confidence," Fritz Machlup's "Do Economists Know Anything?" and Archibald MacLeish's "Loyalty and Freedom." The feature which defies all efforts to heap adequate praise upon it is, of course, Irwin Edman's commentary. But other articles, too numerous to name, are in the same class as these.

I sincerely hope that you will continue in the path you have chosen for yourselves, and which is so deeply appreciated by your readers.

ROBERT M. KAUFMAN
New York, New York

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More About Loyalty Oaths

Mr. Willard De Yoe's letter in the Summer, 1953, edition of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR is an appeal for conformity. I have been in the Army nearly a year and during this time have been told what to wear, whom to salute, how to make my bed and where to keep my socks and underwear. The orders may be logical enough in most instances, and of course everything is done for "my own good." But they are orders, nevertheless. They insult my intelligence and personal habits. In short, they have deprived me of my freedom and pressed me into conformity.

The loyalty oath is like the salute in the Army. You acknowledge your allegiance to a symbol, an organization, a group. If I am loyal to America, my loyalty is in my heart. I don't need to pledge; I don't have to be forced to be loyal. If I am not, no amount of force is going to make me. I can salute and sign oaths to exhaustion, but they mean little when there is no feeling behind them. Communists would be the last persons to avoid an oath. Indeed, it would create a false sense of security on the part of those who demand such allegiance, for they think they have friends when in reality they have treacherous enemies.

If I am loyal to God, I need not pledge to keep the Ten Commandments. I will do it of my own free will, Mr. De Yoe. I might take the liberty to suggest a change in your sentence, from: "If a person is loyal to God, I am puzzled why he or she would refuse to pledge to keep the Ten Commandments" to: "If a person is loyal to God, I am puzzled why he or she would *need* to pledge to keep the Ten Commandments."

EDWARD JAY
Fort Ord, California

Loss of Confidence

There is much, very much, to be said for the ideas expressed by Dr. Krutch in his essay "The Loss of Confidence" [AS: Spring, 1953]. It is lamentable that man has learned how to split the atom when he has progressed in the study of his nature just to the point where he realizes his certain animal and mechanical qualities, just to the point where he realizes that he is more emotion than intellect. "The intellect is a speck upon a sea of feeling." And such meager understanding of human nature could be destructive if we allowed fear to paralyze our minds because of the knowledge of what our hands can do.

But who is afraid? The scientists? The heads of nations? Both are busy: one with nature, the other with strategy. The more the former know of nature, the more the latter must concern themselves with strategic defenses. It is the great mass of us, who only sit on the merry-go-round, who are frightened. An atom blast somewhere in the Soviet Union is felt in a Maryland schoolroom where children almost daily practice "taking cover."

Therefore, the scientists must say, "Men, do not fear. I have given you weapons to destroy yourself but you, nevertheless, are capable of making your own decisions." And the heads of nations must say, "Our cities are secure so long as we obtain that atoll, three thousand miles across the sea, for a bombing base. But, as always, we will keep our powder dry."

What of the little man who has lost confidence, the little "worrying animal," always concerned for his home, his family, his bread, and now afraid for his life and his unborn generation?

You have said, Dr. Krutch, "The road back is not an easy one." But there is no road, not even a path. Fear is made by headlines, not by laboratory experimentalists who have found something in common between man and the rat. On such analogy, the mass of men have not been sold. And while some of them may have read Wells or Shaw, they simply read a corking good story.

So I speak for the little "worrying animal," who must find his succor in the happy "treason of Beria" and the split down the Soviet middle. Thomas Wolfe once asked why we must batten on the blood of our brother. Show me another way, for I would kneel at the tomb of Socrates.

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